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The Modern Self in the Labyrinth:

A Study of Entrapment in the Works of Weber, Freud, and Foucault

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ABSTRACT

In the works of Weber, Freud, and Foucault we find a distinct depiction of the relation between the self and modern civilization. This thesis describes that relation as "entrapment": the self has become mired in the life orders of modernity and is unable to reign over them. The primary hazard of these orders is their imposition of subjectivities that are highly circumscribed, subjectivities more responsive to external functions and imperatives than to the expression of individuality. Underlying this outlook is a new consciousness of time; in lieu of evolutionary and progressive theories of history, a tragic view emerges. History is seen as devoid of any deterministic necessity, yet its collective products have become too weighty and entrenched to allow for radical, over-arching political transformations. The thesis examines how, beginning with these shared presuppositions, Weber, Freud, and Foucault develop very different understandings of entrapment, understandings that pose fundamental challenges to one other.

RESUME

Dans cette thèse nous proposons que les oeuvres de Weber, Freud et Foucault décrivent clairement la relation entre le Moi et la civilisation moderne. Cette relation consiste en un emprisonnement: le Moi est prisonnier de la vie quotidienne moderne et est incapable de la maîtriser Le danger principal de la vie quotidienne est qu'elle nous impose des contraintes bien définies qui repondent plus à des fonctions externes et à des impératifs qu'à l'expression de l'individu. Une nouvelle prise de conscience du temps, pour laquelle une vision tragique de l'Histoire remplace les théories évolutives et progressistes, souligne ce problème. L'Histoire est sans nécessité déterministe, et pourtant, dans sa totalité elle est devenue trop massive et engoncée pour permettre tout changement politique radical et global.

Dans cette thèse, nous examinons comment, en partant de ces hypothèses, Weber, Freud et Foucault développent des visions très différentes de l'emprisonnement, qui se questionnent mutuellement.

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Acknowledgments

Contents

Chapter One:

Introduction: The Origins of Entrapment Theories

On judgment day, Islam professes, everyone who had ever made a portrait of an animated being will be brought back to life. Then he will be ordered to infuse his creations with life, and, after he shall ultimately fail, he will be thrown together with his artifacts into a purifying fire. Ever since my childhood, I have experienced this fear from the doubling or onerous visual repetition of reality, in face of the great mirrors. The endless, smooth operation of these mirrors, their surveillance of my actions, their cosmic mimicking--all these had something supernatural about them, especially when night settled in. One of my most passionate prayers to God or my guardian angel was to grant me sleep without mirrors. As I now recall it, mirrors were a source of anxiety for me: at times it was the impending distortion of reality that threatened me, at others the prospect that they would reflect my face, which has been disfigured by strange, agonizing events. I knew this sort of anxiety once permeated the entire world.

Jorge Luis Borges, *The Enwrapped Mirrors*

Introduction

This work sets out to examine the theme of "entrapment" within modern civilization, the sense that the world generated by moderns has become both dehumanizing and inescapable. This is a mode of thought that reached full development in the twentieth century, and among its paradigmatic representatives are Weber, Freud, and Foucault, who will be the authors studied below. Yet the origins of entrapment thinking can already be found in the late eighteenth century, where the self is first depicted as engaged in a conflictual relation with a civilization that has become estranged. A rift was opening up between the two, with the self experiencing itself as under threat of subjection, not to this or that person or transcendental entity, but to social institutions. These institutions or life orders are perceived in the light of new conceptions of autonomy and of the human capacity for amelioration; they are the outcome of human action that is not answerable to or constrained by any natural or divine scheme (but that may be part of a self-forged historical narrative). Hence entrapment is a phenomenon of a world experienced as self-made; the difficulty of coming to terms with this world is exacerbated because its ills are seen as self-inflicted and devoid of deterministic necessity. Finally, entrapment refers to the *modernity* of civilization, to social phenomena that have emerged in the last few centuries or that have taken a radically different shape during this era: commercial society, bureaucracy, human and social sciences, bourgeois mores, etc. These phenomena, according to entrapment theories, ingrain destructive patterns of thinking and acting.

Entrapment, then, is distinguished not only by the unique self/civilization relationship it harbors, but also by the nature of the malaise it highlights. Entrapment means a threat that

pertains to *who* we are: from Rousseau to Foucault, the modern self is seen as dehumanized, disfigured, mechanized, produced by its environment. What is common to these and other adjectives is that their subject is identity. It is not economic well-being or political rights which are principally at issue, but the constitution of selfhood: character and inner motivations, spirituality and sexuality. Modernity is distinguished by mushrooming, homogenizing conditions that deny autonomy in shaping one's life and that belie the expression of singularity. Hence the chief image haunting the entrapment imagination is that of a normalized and inwardly impoverished individual.

In contrast to the recent, often abstract debate between liberals and communitarians concerning the nature of the self, entrapment writers develop a contextualized reading.[1] The self is not to be analyzed metaphysically and ahistorically, but as a concrete being that bears the imprints of particular life-orders. On the one hand, this reading brings out the limited usefulness of individual rights in guarding the formation of identity: the self is shaped by social and economic forces that penetrate juridical bulwarks, forces that display the liberal belief in an autonomous choice of the good life to be a chimera. On the other hand, the entrapment perspective also reveals the limited prospect for harmonious communal life and for the constitutive role of cultural tradition. The trapped self agonistically confronts the products of civilization, whether economic, scientific, linguistic, or other, and these products are unavoidably seen as intertwined with the history and present organization of the community. The implications of entrapment writings for liberalism and communitarianism are examined only briefly in the following chapters, but one of the methodological arguments of this dissertation is that any conception of the self must begin from the historically concrete.

In exploring the theme of entrapment I shall examine the works of Weber, Freud, and Foucault, since this theme is constitutive of their writings, which hold a prominent place in our culture. The three authors not only presuppose a gulf and a battle between self and civilization and study this predicament in relation to identity, but they also betray a shared historical consciousness in other respects. In contrast to proto-entrapment writers such as Marx and Nietzsche, these three are skeptical about the possibility of defeating the malaise of modernity through human action, whether personal or communally oriented. They view the self as unable to transcend its historical circumstances, displacing visions of human omnipotence with a sober recognition of our limited ability to shape or escape the present. Indeed, one of the central purposes of this dissertation will be to show the shared presuppositions and beliefs behind the writings of Weber, Freud, and Foucault, and to argue that we should see them as articulating a new view of the self's place in history in general and in modernity in particular. A comparison between these thinkers may expose a mode of thought central to the twentieth century, a mode that has been neglected thus far primarily because these three writers have not been studied systematically in relation to one another.

In the reverse direction, a study of the shared historical consciousness of Weber, Freud, and Foucault could lead to insightful interpretation of each individual author; as in any hermeneutical circle, a reconstruction of the whole could change our understanding of the parts. In addition to its over-arching goal, then, this study is aimed at contributing to existing scholarship on each of these writers, and aspires to do so precisely in virtue of developing a comprehensive view of a particular historical problematic.

Finally, if these three authors have been chosen partly because of their similarities, their differences too have been an important factor. Weber, Freud, and Foucault each have a distinct idea about the nature of the present malaise: the evaporation and impoverishment of meaning, over-inhibited instincts and psychic and social homelessness, the imposition of modes of being through reformative *dispositifs* and confined language. While sharing an interpretive grid, they disagree about the nature of the snare and where it lies. Hence, despite a certain amount of overlap in some of the subjects they have studied, Weber, Freud, and Foucault inquire into different aspects of modernity: sociology of religion, bureaucracy, and capitalism; sexual mores and psychic constitution; language, human sciences, and reformative institutions. This heterogeneity of perspectives allows us to see entrapment as a problematic not confined to one aspect of contemporary life, but playing a pervasive role in our culture.

The present chapter is intended to study the origins of entrapment theories, from the late eighteenth century up to the late nineteenth. The first section examines those distinctively modern institutions that are perceived as constituting the cardinal threat to the identity and character of the individual by imposing demands for hyper-order. The second section inquires into the Kantian origins of the notion that a gulf and strife exist between self (noumenal) and civilization (empirical reality). For Kant the role of practical reason is to overcome this predicament; his position is then juxtaposed to that of *Frankenstein*, where the Romantic skepticism regarding the organizing function of reason is symbolically and forcefully expressed. In section three I construct two ideal types that capture the main strategies espoused by nineteenth-century writers in their attempts to confront the danger springing from a civilization apparently out of human control: (1) communal remolding

of the social, and (2) cultivation of individual, authentic difference. Section four demonstrates the failure of these strategies by examining Weber's critique of Marx and Nietzsche, a critique that signifies the transition from proto-entrapment to entrapment writers.

I.   *Modernity and the Imposition of Hyper-Order*

I have said that we should see Weber, Freud, and Foucault as highly troubled by the normalization that takes hold of our desire, language, thought. The etymology of the word "norm" already connotes an invented or artificial formation. Sophists such as Antiphon and Callicles saw in *nomos*--the written, city law--a mere convention that originates simply because of the functional need of society to maintain order. The notion of a normalized society takes this view to the extreme, because it sees the norm not in legal terms and as pertaining to questions of justice, but as a tool that allows a far more extensive systemization of the social universe. This concern with over-crystallized institutions and modes of life is rather recent. It begins with eighteenth-century writers and their critique of the uniformity and the dearth of autonomy that they saw evolving around them. Three major sources were thought to breed these developments: the division of labor associated with commercial society: the various agencies of the state; and the urban culture with its public spaces. Each of these sources was perceived as distinctively modern, and hence traditional forms of expressing social criticism seemed to offer little guidance: neither a religious discourse about faith and the good, nor a legalistic one about

individual rights and just government seemed to address the new plight of moderns. In the middle of the eighteenth century, then, a new mode of reflection emerged, one that concerned the relation between the identity of the self and the nature of the evolving life-orders. The rationale of the latter is characterized by an urge for order and regularity that haʳ gone wild, and that demands ever-narrower delineation of human conduct. We can see this type of reflection in the three examples that follow, each of which presents the dangers of homogenization and subjection in a different sphere.

In the first book of *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith celebrates the division of labor inaugurated by capitalism. Not only, he avers, does this division increase the wealth of the community and better the circumstances of the poor, but it also has benign effects upon the *character* of those immersed within it (which means most members of society). The competition constitutive of the market galvanizes conduct, invigorates the spirit of invention, enhances the virtues of sobriety and punctuality, and even fosters independence and the capacity for reasoning. Thus, while acknowledging the dominance of self-love and hunger for self-esteem in bourgeois society, Smith suggests powerful *moral* reasons for extolling the new economic system. But in the fifth book of his work we find a different Smith. In words that echo those of his contemporaries (Millar, Wallace, and especially Ferguson), he voices apprehension and dismay in the face of the impact the division of labor has over the personality.

> In the progress of the division of labor, the employment of the far greater part of those who live by labor, that is, of the great body of the people, comes to be confined to a few very simple operations, frequently to one or two. *But the understandings of the greater part of men are necessarily formed by their employment.* The man whose life is spent in performing a few simple operations, of which the effects too are perhaps always the

same . . . has no occasion to exert his understanding or to exercise his invention in finding out expedients for removing difficulties which never occur. He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become . . . [my emphasis].

The uniformity of his stationary life naturally corrupts the courage of his mind, and makes him regard with abhorrence the irregular, uncertain, and adventurous life of the soldier.[2]

In commercial society, individuals may manage to achieve material well-being or even to secure their mere existence only by harnessing their energies and skills to a specialized task. Capitalism contains a strange paradox: while the system offers infinite possible occupations, each one of them demands a strict and monotonous operation as a precondition of success; so while we may each have a singular vocation, uniformity is nevertheless entrenched in all of us. In precapitalist societies, according to Smith, individuals were adept at performing numerous, non-specialized tasks. Not being tethered to an economic function, one could (at least in certain societies) expand one's experience and horizons by participating in the political and military life of the community. Persons moored to a specific vocation, in contrast, lack the leisure, the motivations, the knowledge, and the "courage" of mind necessary to engage in reflection upon matters that exceed the immediate occupation; they embody sameness, since they are devoid of the resources needed to develop their person. The colonialization of life by uniformity in the economic sphere has, in short, a positive and a negative facet: first, the rhythm of the occupation itself ingrains homogeneity of conduct; second, the system perpetuates the under-development of the personality, the absence of distinctiveness. Both forge an individual for whom predictability and orderliness are not evils to be endured--but an

ethos to be embraced.

For some eighteenth-century writers, the modern state is the chief threat to the identity of the individual. Herder, for example, expresses this view. Writing when Frederick the Great was initiating extensive bureaucratic reforms (especially after the annexation of Silesia), Herder witnessed the penetration of a growing number of state agencies into most spheres of social and economic life. State officials regulated internal and external trade, levels of production, construction and transportation projects, taxation, education, health and hygiene, and more. This tightening of state control over the individual and society was combined with the establishment of a large army notorious for its strict discipline and hierarchy, an institution, incidentally, that Herder regarded with special dislike. Frederick saw the population, with its institutions and the things it produced, as a resource to be employed deliberately and precisely in order to magnify state power and status; in his proclama·ions at least, he collapsed the idea of politics into dutiful civil service, that of leadership into instrumental regulation. Frederick followed reason of state theorists in understanding the state as having objective needs that must be studied through new bodies of knowledge and should be answered through the formulation of distinct codes of action that may be at odds with conventional morality; the state, in other words, is a synchronized and cohesive entity with its own singular rationale. Herder—who was the apostle of modern notions of authenticity—held this philosophy in contempt.

> Since we are told by the political scientist that every well constituted state must be a machine regulated only by the will of one, can there conceivably be any greater bliss than to serve in this machine as an unthinking component? What, indeed, can be more satisfying than to be whirled around all our lives on Ixion's wheel, contrary to our better knowledge and conscience, with no comfort other than that of being relieved of the

exercise of our free and self-determining mind in order to find happiness
in functioning as insensible cogs in a perfect machine?

The state can give us many ingenious contrivances; unfortunately it can
also deprive us of something far more essential: our own selves.[3]

While Herder's theories of language and society present a holistic view that eschews the contemplation of a presocial predicament, he conceives of human beings as limbs only of "natural" units such as families and tribes. The state, in contrast, is a mere artifact and tool, its legitimacy always open to question according to whether or not it benefits the lives of its *individual* citizens. But the modern state poses a dilemma: in some ways it undeniably improves the well-being of its citizens; this is done, however, only by expanding the bureaucratic apparatus and its authority, by mobilizing this machine according to a *modus operandi* that is rationalized and universal. The spaces left open to personal judgment, untrammelled conduct, and cultivation of distinctiveness are shrinking in such a state, and people are forced to act according to external and global imperatives. A similar development takes place on the communal level: in socially heterogeneous Europe, the modern state imposes uniform administration and regulations upon groups that have particular exigencies because of divergent geographic conditions, social practices, or cultural heritages; and in its colonies overseas, the state is equally culturally blind in its exploitation. (The nation-state may avoid this pitfall, but Herder seems to have been ambivalent about even this type of state, his contribution to nationalist thought notwithstanding.)

Yet it was Rousseau, of course, who advanced the most profound and influential critique of the dearth of autonomy and the uniformity inherent in modern institutions and culture.

"Civilized man is born and dies a slave," he writes in *Emile*. "The infant is bound up in swaddling clothes, the corpse is nailed down in his coffin. All his life long man is imprisoned by our institutions."[4] Our multi-faceted other-dependency is the chief reason for this social imprisonment, Rousseau declares. On the most immediate level, the advent of civilization involves the spawning of (artificial) needs, and these can be answered only by a sophisticated division of labor. "[T]he bonds of servitude are formed merely from the mutual dependence of men and the reciprocal needs that unite them; it is impossible to enslave a man without having first put him in the position of being incapable of doing without another."[5] To gratify our material needs, we must live together and establish lasting bonds, sell our labor and obey our superiors, and maintain smooth relations as a background to our economic transactions.

Rousseau, however, is more concerned with another facet of other-dependency, one more tethering than shared material exigencies: in modern culture, he argues, the individual is psychologically dependent upon others for securing his very sense of existence and selfhood. "[T]he savage lives in himself; the man accustomed to the ways of society is always outside himself and knows how to live only in the opinions of others. And it is, as it were, from their judgment alone that he draws the sentiment of his own existence. . . ."[6] The savage is motivated by internal and immediate wants, upon which others have little bearing; the modern individual acquires a consciousness of his being only through the recognition and approval of his fellows, and is driven by an insatiable hunger for self-esteem. The other becomes both a necessary support (because without him our ego is weak and has no experience of itself) and a harsh competitor (since the search for recognition in society is a zero-sum game). With this ambivalence towards the other, the

self becomes fractured, torn between outer affability and benevolence and inward envy and contempt.

Rousseau distinguishes sharply between the psychological makeup of the savage and that of the modern individual. The former experiences only *amour de soi-meme*, that is to say, "a natural sentiment which leads every animal to be vigilant in its own preservation," without this unreflective love of self involving reliance on or harm to others. The civilized individual, however, knows only *amour propre*, that is, "a purely relative and factitious feeling, which arises in society, and leads each individual to make more of himself than any other, causes all the mutual damage men inflict on one another, and is the true source of the sense of honor."[7] As social beings we can love and respect ourselves only through the affirming gaze of others and comparison with them; bound therefore to live on the surface, so to speak, we are alienated from our inwardness (what Rousseau sometimes calls the voice of nature within). In the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*, Rousseau notes the relation between the production of sameness in modern society and this self-alienation.

> Today, when the more subtle inquiries and a more refined taste have reduced the art of pleasing to established rules, a veil of deceitful uniformity reigns in our mores, and all minds seem to have been cast in the same mold. Without ceasing, politeness makes demands, propriety gives orders; without ceasing, common customs are followed, never one's own lights. One no longer dares to seem what one really is; and in this perpetual constraint, the men who make up this herd we call society will, if placed in the same circumstances, do all the same things unless a stronger motive deter them.[8]

Civilization means the progressive withdrawal of self, its de-assertion. In order to win approval we must espouse the prevalent cultural codes of decorum, which dictate similar

ways of speaking, feeling, dressing--the silent ways in which society imposes certain predictable modes of human interaction. But Rousseau is even more troubled by an intellectual homogenization that emerges in the (partly) new public spaces of the eighteenth century. We usually think of social institutions such as the court, the salon, the theater, the newspaper, or the bookstore as essential to the development of our contemporary culture, as establishing the context for the exchange of ideas and debate. Rousseau does not deny this, yet he highlights the pressures constitutive of these spaces: they provide unprecedented room for the directive force of public opinion, a new and anonymous entity whose weight the individual finds both hard to escape and dangerous to ignore. In the arts, avers Rousseau, this phenomenon generates writings and other types of cultural production aimed at entertaining and pleasing the audience rather than at challenging it; conformity is the sacrifice fame commands. Furthermore, in our moral practice we prefer to abide by what is expected by tradition and conventions--even if these expectations are foreign to our inner life and authentic existence, even if they may lead to our ruin (as one might argue that the fate of Rousseau's Julie demonstrates).[9]

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Smith, Herder, and Rousseau articulate new concerns about the self: the modern forms of the economic, the political, and the social spheres, they argue respectively, mould individuals who are more identical and predictable, more disciplined and submissive. In the history of political thought, a Hobbesian, chaotic state (of nature, in his case) was often perceived as the imminent danger; now, hyper-order emerges as the pertinent threat. For these three critics of modernity, the crystallized patterns that govern human life were

not a source of solace: they feared that there was something arbitrary about these patterns, something pathologically out of control. There seems to be no way to ground existing social configurations in the "nature of things," to depict them as ultimately beneficial and benevolent (although Herder and especially Smith also voice the opposite view). In short, the critiques of uniformity and subjection we have examined reveal the breakdown of both Natural Law and Deist theories.[10]

As long as Natural Law theories and Deism dominated social and political discourse, it was assumed that by beholding better, by invigorating the understanding of what lies outside ourselves, we could fathom the laws by which we should organize individual and social life. Any social and human dilemma could, in principle at least, be answered by referring to some natural or transcendental order of things, an order imbued with reason accessible to human beings. There is something reassuring about this worldview, since however much we may have departed from what is natural and right, however much we may live in distortion, the possibility exists of uncovering the buried maxims and recovering from the present malaise. Human endeavors are imagined to be carried out within a *contained* world: even if these endeavors are innovative and extreme, misguided and dangerous, there are nevertheless given boundaries to the transformations we may induce in our social organization or natural surroundings.

The notion that the world secretes a pregiven order even in its smallest details is epitomized by Deist thought. As Charles Taylor shows in *Sources of the Self*, eighteenth-century authors such as Hutcheson, Tindal, and Pope believed in a providential arrangement in which things co-exist in interlocking harmony (often typified by the image

of a clock). From the outset, God has created a world in which he does not need to intervene and where history has no role either as agent of redemption or decay; in a machine-like fashion, things are orchestrated for the best as they are. The Deists affirmed reality and aspired to display the perfect agreement that exists not only between human beings and nature, but also among the purposes and occupations of members of society. These naturally mesh, and hence when instrumental conduct and self-love are followed the outcome is the greatest benefit for all. Just when the notion of a pregiven order was starting to be an anachronism, Deism expressed the most ardent version of this belief. As Pope writes, "All Chance Direction, which thou canst not see; All Discord, Harmony not understood; All partial Evil, universal Good . . . One truth is clear, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT."[11]

Those who lived in the period that followed had to struggle with the suspicion that all direction is the fruition of chance, that harmony is an imposition involving some evil, that whatever is, is possibly wrong. In a world understood as devoid of a Great Chain of Being or of God's organizing mind, hyper-order may be conceived of as a feat of chance- -and as a movement in a hazardous direction advancing *ad infinitum*. Nothing necessarily steers us into this path; nothing would necessarily thwart it. But before Weber, Freud, Foucault, and others embraced and radicalized this skeptical historical outlook, Enlightenment writers sought to fill the void established by the crisis of Natural Law theories and Deism by depicting a world where human reason was the new organizing principle.

Materialist theorists such as Holbach, Bentham, and Helvètius thought the world should

be objectivized. In their view, humans should formulate causal laws through scientific and mathematical language that sees nothing but matter moving purposelessly in a void. The hope is not only to advance knowledge--which is not a new goal--but to foster the ability to manipulate the environment according to human interests. This is not simply an instrumental outlook, however, since it professes that dignity consists in a capacity to disengage from false beliefs and metaphysical notions. The clearest articulation of this vision (which originates with Descartes and Bacon) may be found in Condorcet's *The Progress of the Human Mind*. There he proclaims that "[t]he time will . . . come when the sun will shine only on free men who know no other master but their reason."[12] Condorcet cites some evidence for the progressive realization of this prophecy: the revolution in the arts and sciences, technological innovations, the use of statistics and the perfection of predictability, the dissemination of knowledge, the ethos of critical thought. The Deists thought of a self attuned to a cosmic order, constantly striving to decipher the intentions of God; the *aufklärer* of a self marked by rational control and ingenuity.[13] Responsibility means a certain use of reason, a thorough inquiry into the world and a creative transformation of this world for the promotion of human happiness.

This optimistic and familiar worldview of the Enlightenment theorists had another side, however. One could say that the self was finally awakening from its slumber, that it was gaining an inkling of hitherto dormant and powerful forces, that it would now be able to improve its well-being. But, paradoxically, it is precisely this revised view of man that raises the disquieting notion that we may lack the necessary insight and means required to oversee the social world we have energetically brought about. We begin to recognize that the introduction of machines may chain us to a uniform and degrading existence, the

erection of state institutions may lead to our subjection, the development of mushrooming arts and sciences may establish new domains of conformism. When the human world is no longer conceived of as circumscribed and naturally ordered, the effects of our actions can be limitless and little opposed, the possibility of reversing these effects always doubtful. Thus the Enlightenment's confidence in human powers is mirrored by a consciousness of uncertainty and anxiety *in direct relation* to the perceived potency of these powers. A haphazard and jumbled human world may not be a characteristic of a pre-social state, a residue of the distant past--it may be a property of a future we autonomously shape. Frankenstein expresses this duality well. "All my speculations and hopes are as nothing," he cries, "and like the arch-angel who aspired to omnipotence, I am chained in an eternal hell."[14]

II.   *Civilization as a Self-made Other: Frankenstein contra Kant*

The threat of social chaos is intertwined with another idea concerning the relation between self and civilization that emerges towards the end of the eighteenth century. Kantian philosophy may be seen as the turning point in this respect, since it depicts an unbridgeable rift between the self and its social institutions. This *conceptual* rift is grounded in the duality of the self: Kant partitions the self into a phenomenal part that is the vehicle of history, and a noumenal-moral part that embodies our humanity. The world we inhabit is the fruition of actions driven by our empirical, deterministic nature, which therefore stands at a necessary distance from our rational and autonomous self.

While depictions of the self as divided are nothing new, *Kantian philosophy transforms a relation within the self into a relation between self and civilization*: the Otherness of the empirical within is projected outward and assigned to self-produced, social institutions. Or, in the reverse direction, one could say that an aspect of the self becomes an antagonist just because it is seen as the agent within of a hostile social matrix.

Now there are two contrasting ways to perceive this conceptual hiatus between the self and its Other, civilization. First, Kant in his philosophy of history strives to demonstrate that in *praxis* there is an incremental abatement of the gulf between the self (as practical reason) and its social institutions. Championing the Enlightenment idea of rationality as an organizing principle, Kant studies the modern forms of economy, politics, and society and defends what had been criticized by Smith, Herder, and Rousseau. He avers that in each of these spheres the conditions become ripe for reason to manifest its independence and moral character: through an international division of labor and economic interdependence, civility is enhanced; through a growing state apparatus and improved enforcement of positive law, a conduct compatible with morality is habituated; through new social spaces and opportunities for public debate, enlightenment is advanced. Kant does not see the increasingly orderly character of modern life as problematic; on the contrary, for the first time in human history there is an opening for realizing the kernel of our humanity in a civilization made increasingly hospitable to it.

Yet some of Kant's contemporaries envisioned a radically different relation between the self and its products, as exemplified by Mary Shelley. *Frankenstein* incarnates two of the Kantian presuppositions: human beings are assigned a Promethean role, and a gulf exists

between them and their creations. But in contrast to Kant, Mary Shelley pictures a proliferation of Otherness, i.e., a growing estrangement and fear between the self and its creations. The foreignness of the social world and our sense of homelessness within it grows, she argues with the English Romantics, as we valorize the dominance of disembodied rationality. Thus if, for Kant, man is the proud founder of his world--historically, morally, and epistemologically--for Mary Shelley, man is a misguided sovereign, haunted by his own monstrous artifacts. In *Frankenstein* the self dwells in an entropic world that seems to belie the threat of hyper-order. But there are shared concerns behind the two visions: both hyper-order theories and *Frankenstein* argue that human agents act within a space unbounded by a pre-given format, that these agents lack the dexterity required to master and amend the effects of their deeds, and that these deeds establish an overbearing reality inclined to wreck its founders. Hyper-order and hyper-chaos seem to be two facets of the same historical imagination.

1.   *Kant and the Age of the Abatement of Otherness*

The problematic relation between man and civilization (*Kultur*)[15] begins, according to Kant, with the realization that man has two points of view from which he can understand himself and his motivations. "He can consider himself *first*--so far as he belongs to the sensible world--to be under the laws of nature (heteronomy); and *secondly*--so far as he belongs to the intelligible world--to be under laws which, being independent of nature, are not empirical but have their ground in reason alone."[16] As a phenomenal being, the

individual is propelled by brute desires or complex, self-centered interests. However, accomplishing the ends of these interests and desires does not generate satisfaction; on the contrary, it establishes room for new wants. In fact, argues Kant, man is a hostage to his natural aspect, since "it is not his nature to rest and be contented with the possession and enjoyment of anything whatever."[17] Motivated by his particularistic and heteronomical will, the individual comes to view the material and social worlds as means to be intelligently utilized in abetting his fame, power, happiness, and wealth.

In contrast to the empirical self, Kant postulates a noumenal self characterized by its unconditioned freedom. This self (or "person," as Kant names it) is capable of wholly autonomous choices, since it is unfettered by causality. Detached from the narrow horizons of egoism and unconditioned by history, the noumenal self is insulated from external and internal circumstances. Kant thinks the self's humanity resides in this capacity to disengage, to embrace an objective point of view from which it can rationally deliberate about morality; here, and only here, reason acts spontaneously, following its own distinctive quality. This deliberation inescapably leads the self to act according to imperatives it accepts *a priori*, i.e., according to formal principles that command absolute universality, as well as respect for the other and for oneself as ends in themselves.[18] But when it grasps history in its totality, the moral self beholds a reality that is in essence foreign to itself.

The mechanisms behind the erection of civilization are rather sinister, contends Kant. Here he follows Smith's argument in *Theory of Moral Sentiment*. Smith observes that human beings in general and in commercial society in particular are hungry for fame,

influence, and a type of aesthetic enjoyment that comes from the acquisition of objects (or to use his language, "baubles and trinkets"). The contentment associated with the accomplishment of these ends is a mirage, but one that is an essential fuel to the economy. "It is well that nature imposes upon us in this manner," writes Smith. "It is this deception which rouses and keeps in continual motion the industry of mankind. It is this which first prompted them to cultivate the ground, to build houses, to found cities and commonwealths, and to invent and improve all the sciences and arts, which ennoble and embellish human life."[19] In a similar manner, Kant holds that social institutions evolve from complex interaction between individuals following subjective motivations, and that the human capacities responsible for this evolution are grounded in the self-seeking character of man.

> The means that nature uses to bring about the development of all man's capacities is the *antagonism* among them in society . . . In this context, I understand antagonism to mean men's *unsocial sociability [ungesellige Geselligkeit]*, i.e., their tendency to enter into society, combined, however, with a thorough going resistance that constantly threatens to sunder this society. Man has a propensity for *living in society*, for in that state he feels himself to be more than a man, i.e., feels himself to be more than the development of his natural capacities. He also has, however, a great tendency to isolate himself, for he finds in himself the unsocial characteristic of wanting everything to go according to his own desires, and he therefore anticipates resistance everywhere. . . . Now this resistance awakens all of man's powers, brings him to overcome his tendency towards laziness, and driven by his desire for honor, power, or property to secure status among his fellows.
>
> Without [these] characteristics of unsociability . . . man would live as an Arcadian shepherd, in perfect concord, contentment, and mutual love, and all talents would lie eternally dormant in their seed.[20]

Civilization is the embodiment of incentives and deeds that oppose the human transcendence of both ego-centeredness and instrumentalism towards others. In the spirit

of the Enlightenment, Kant assumes that human beings have a need to realize their powers and skills, and that this need--not material scarcity or physical insecurity--is the main reason for entering into a communal state. But social existence stimulates the empirical facet of one's being: it propels the pursuit of social goods such as wealth and honor, and enhances utilitarian modes of behavior in promoting them. In part, these goods are sought for their own sake and for the passing satisfaction that they bring; but they also allow one to maximize the space in which a particularistic will could be exercised. Selves hungry for distinction are therefore induced to generate arts, sciences, technology. In fact, according to Kant, even war--the epitome of human competitiveness as well as barbarity--has an essential role in the creation of culture, since "in spite of the dreadful afflictions with which it visits the human race," war is nevertheless an occasion "for developing all the talents serviceable to culture to the highest possible pitch."[21]

From this perspective, the formation of civilization involves exploitation and manipulation, oppression and destruction; it is a rather immoral tale, in the face of which practical reason could experience nothing but alienation. Now if Kant had stopped here, he would have had to admit that his moral theory was of little use, since it is consistently rebuffed by human reality. To avoid this pitfall, it is essential for him to demonstrate that in the course of history social institutions are rendered increasingly compatible with the maxims of morality--despite the conscious intentions of the actors. Civilization must become less of an Other; a seemingly chaotic social predicament must become an order agreeable to reason. Kant therefore argues that, if we examine history carefully, we shall discern a teleological, invisible-hand-like plan of Nature operating towards materializing this state. (We are permitted to contemplate this plan in "reflective judgment" without,

however, attributing to it an ontological status.) In pursuing its aim, Nature uses the unsociability of man.

> [N]ature comes to the aid of that revered but practically impotent general will, which is grounded in reason. Indeed, this aid comes directly from those self-seeking inclinations, and it is merely by organizing the nation well (which is certainly within man's capacity) that they are able to direct their powers against one another, and one inclination is able to check or cancel the destructive tendencies of the others. The result for reason is the same as if neither sets of opposing inclinations existed, and so man, even though he is not morally good, is forced to be a good citizen. As hard as it may sound, the problem of organizing a nation is solvable even for a people comprised of devils (if only they possess understanding).[22]

Contingent and self-centered intentions produce, despite themselves, a social order compatible with reason. Here Kant seems to be reinterpreting a tradition familiar in early modern thought. In *The Passions and the Interests*, Albert Hirschman shows how theorists as different as Spinoza, Pascal, Mandeville, Montesquieu, Hume, and Smith all believed that the stability of civil society and of the capitalist market are dependent upon a useful inner-dynamic of human predispositions. These writers, each in his own way, posited one set of inclinations called "passions" (e.g., envy, violence, revenge, sexual lust, craving for pleasure) as being opposed to and checked by another set of inclinations called "interests" (e.g., gain, good name, status). Hence Montesquieu, for example, writes that "it is fortunate for men to be in a situation in which, though their passions may prompt them to be wicked, they have nevertheless an interest in not doing so."[23] Harmony is therefore a macro phenomenon that is morality-free: it emerges despite the conscious intentions of actors, and presupposes their self-serving interests.

Kant is employing the argument that was used in the economic sphere to explain the

formation of political institutions that embody the principles of Right. At the most general level, sociability is countered by unsociability, the need to perfect oneself through living with others by hostility towards them. But more specifically, Kant avers that while individuals are inclined to defy impediments to their private will, they are nevertheless obliged to check this inclination because they are also bent on preserving their person, possessions, status; and with communal life only amplifying the available social goods, the preservative incentive is empowered. Civilization has a built-in mechanism that promotes its security: the greater the opportunity to acquire wealth and honor, the greater the anxiety of losing these benefits.

Mutual fear, then, convinces self-seeking individuals to establish a system of jurisprudence (*Rechtslehre*) to protect their equal rights to life, property, freedom of occupation, and the like. These are best protected by a constitutional (preferably republican) regime that has universal and binding principles of enforcement. At the international level, states concerned with their economic power and the well-being of their citizens are forced to recognize the destructiveness of war to their society and to common trade. Out of purely utilitarian considerations these states are impelled to form a federation that promotes peace. In this fashion a legal-external order is erected, which both curtails the turbulent implications of humans' animality and establishes the objective conditions that would allow the assertion of practical reason.

But the abatement of the Otherness of civilization demands more than external changes, more than a mere compatibility between historical configuration and innate moral predispositions. Reason, insists Kant, should become an *active force in history*, a

governing principle that imposes its form on reality. In doing so, it confers meaning on man's existence--as well as on Creation as a whole.

> [M]an is the final purpose of creation, since without him the chain of mutually subordinated purposes would not be complete as regards its ground. Only in man, and only in him as subject of morality, do we meet with unconditional legislation in respect of purpose, which therefore alone renders him capable of being the final purpose, to which the whole of nature is teleologically subordinated.[24]

The only being capable of salvaging the world from its purposelessness and mechanistic mode of operation is the self of practical reason. Inanimate material and the creatures of nature (including man as phenomenon) are helplessly fettered within a chain of causality; only the actions that spring from reason are not conditioned in their origins, and have a value intrinsic to themselves, independent of actual consequences. The emergence of a moral and free self on the scene of history could at last confer meaning upon the past interaction of human beings with nature and with each other. And when the freedom of the noumenal self becomes embodied in political and social life, these spheres cease to be extraneous to the self, but become a manifestation of its essence and a proof for its further potential. The world, rather than towering as an impediment to reason, becomes a reality that mirrors individuals, promoting their self-knowledge and confidence.

The project of moral self-discovery and engagement in praxis is ongoing and unending. As Yirmiahu Yovel observes, in Kantian philosophy "man enjoys a central position not by virtue of what he is, but by virtue of what he *ought* to do and become. He must *make* himself the center of creation by using his practical reason to determine its end and by consciously acting to realize it."[25] Kant calls the ideal state to which the self must strive

the "highest good," and it is comprised of the following elements: an ethical community or kingdom of ends where all abide by the moral law; a well-ordered political and social life regulated by a positive law compatible with the principles of reason; and personal well-being, the outcome of civil and international peace. Because of these characteristics, the highest good provides an architectonic and totalizing structure for human striving and deeds in history.

Now in striving for this final goal, Kant explains, "man thinks of himself on an analogy with deity, which while subjectively needing no external (independently existing) thing, can nonetheless not be thought of as enclosed within itself, but rather as determined by the consciousness of its complete self-sufficiency to bring about the highest good outside itself."[26] Kant, like other Enlightenment theorists, affirms the existence of God in the text, so to speak, but displays His redundancy in the subtext. Reason takes His characteristics; it has the same abundance, the same drive to propagate its goodness, the same urge to constitute its surroundings. Hence while reason has a domineering quality, its rule does not involve violence, but rather the termination of violence and disorder altogether.

In Kant, then, we see a dialectic tale of subjection that posits man at the center of Creation. First, reason (as pure or as understanding) constitutes nature (and the phenomenal self) through its epistemic-transcendental structure. Then (as practical) it is alienated from the emerging historical-empirical reality and is helpless in face of human animality. However, after the external conditions are ripe and reason has learned to recognize itself, it is able to subdue and mold the world according to its form. In the

Kantian vision, hominess is a property of the future, the fruition of the successful overcoming of civilization, or man's double; and the Enlightenment--an age where man finally becomes mature and unclouded by dogmas and unfounded beliefs--is a turning point in our destiny, a crossroads on our way home.

2.   *Frankenstein: Reason as the Instigator of Disorder*

Jean Paul Richter, the early nineteenth-century writer, once described the refusal of Romantic poets to commit themselves to the imitation of nature and reality as part of the "lawless, capricious spirit of the present age, which would egoistically annihilate the world and the universe in order to clear a space merely for free play in a void." In his view, artists denied their less than autonomous place in the world. But in an age when "God has set like the sun," Jean Paul added, "soon afterwards the world too passes into darkness. He who scorns the universe respects nothing more than himself and at night fears only his own creations."[27] This admonition seems to be directed towards Kantian and Fichtian idealism as much as towards the Romantic glorification of poetic imagination, since both are driven by the quest for human omnipotence in the construction of reality. *Frankenstein, Or the Modern Prometheus* (1818) expresses the same mistrust in human sovereignty, the same belief in its apocalyptic consequences.[28]

This popular work has received numerous interpretations: the first science fiction work that probes into the dangers of technology; a modern reworking of a Gothic myth; a critique of Christianity and affirmation of materialism; an example of the distorted

patterns of masculinity and femininity in Romanticism; a case study in psychotic breakdown; a symbolic expression of class struggle and of the old aristocracy's fears of the barbaric masses; and more. A more historical-philosophical approach offers a different interpretation: Mary Shelley seems, in fact, to turn the Kantian vision on its head.

The novel, to begin with, uniquely captures the interrelation of two themes prevalent in the literature of its time. The first is the depiction of the self as divided and duplicated. This idea begins to appear in works such as Godwin's *The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794) and several short stories by E. T. A. Hoffmann (as we shall see in the chapter on Freud). The heyday of this motif in English literature came later, with works such as Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890). In most such works, the relation between the self and its *Doppelgänger* is antagonistic. In *The Divided Self*, Masao Miyoshi shows that this doubling indicates an evolving existential crisis and the disintegration of identity that accompanied an era of radical social transitions. When we examine nineteenth-century texts in social criticism, prose, poetry, or other areas it is hard to see human life then "as steady and see it whole."[29] The second theme in *Frankenstein*, that is also present in other writings of its time, is that of creation and the dynamic between creator and created. Some of the most renowned writings of English Romanticism reveal a preoccupation with this notion, including Blake's *The Book of Urizen* (1794), Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* (1819), and Keats's *Hyperion Poems* (1820). Inspired by humanism (especially in Shelley's case), these works aimed to revolutionize the common perception of the biblical and Greek stories of creation by redefining man's place and responsibility in the universe. As Paul Cantor suggests, these writers discredited the notion of God as the founder of the world

"for the sake of exalting man's own creative powers."[30]

Frankenstein portrays the doubling of the self as being inherently moored to reason's Promethean task. In contrast to Kant, however, the marriage of these two themes in *Frankenstein* generates neither the heightening of order nor the subsiding of Otherness. For Mary Shelley, the autonomous constitution and transformation of the social landscape is possible only by envisioning a divided self whose parts are set against each other. If the world is of the self's own making, then it is a *reification* of the self; but it is not easy to oversee or predict this world, precisely because it is a projection of undefined but apparently formidable human potency. "I considered the being whom I had cast among mankind and endowed with the will and power to effect purposes of horror . . . ," says Frankenstein, "nearly in the light of my own vampire, *my own spirit* let loose from the grave, and forced to destroy all that was dear to me" [my emphasis].[31] The world is composed of offspring (whether living beings or enigmatic social institutions) that echo the self, and yet it is foreign. The creator is fearful not of an unfamiliar external reality, but of incomprehensible, internal forces that permeate his reason and that have been inadvertently materialized. This reified world presents us with an ambiguity: we labor to find our place by oscillating hopelessly between visions of extension and distance, of absolute anthropomorphism and objectification—of the monster as "he" and as merely nameless "It."

Frankenstein opens with an optimism regarding the potency of reason—the limpidity of it, the obedience of its products. Driven by the desire to know, the scientist wants to "pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest

mysteries of creation."[32] The apex of such a quest is the creation of another human life. But Frankenstein desires not only to create someone like himself, but also to elevate himself into a founder of a whole original class of beings: "A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would own their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs."[33] The young Frankenstein understands his quest for omnipotence as intertwined with a general proliferation of goodness and well-being, with a resultant submissive thankfulness. Reason is a venue for overcoming homelessness: through his creative rationality, the inventor expects to feel ultimate belonging and familiarity, since as Founder all will emanate from and become an open book to him.

The attempt of reason to establish the experience of belonging through the constitution of its social environment is ill-fated from the outset because of its *disembodied* nature. The construction of the monster is the culmination of a long, compulsive scientific pursuit in which Frankenstein becomes estranged from his surroundings. He is blind to the magnificence of creation, to emotional yearnings: "my eyes were insensible to the charms of nature. And the same feelings which made me neglect the scenes around me caused me also to forget [my] friends." He confesses that he "seemed to have lost all soul or sensation but for this one pursuit."[34] If he had been more responsive to the world, perhaps he would not have needed to generate it anew. But he wants absolute relatedness and sway, and an ambience that reproduces the workings of his reason seems to be the proper answer. Hence Muriel Spark is correct in remarking that "we may visualize Frankenstein's *Doppelgänger* or Monster . . . as representing reason in isolation, since he is the creature of an obsessional rational effort."[35]

The fruit of this disengaged reason is aesthetically marred, even repulsive. In contrast to the typical depictions of Enlightenment theorists, reason in *Frankenstein* is seen as enmeshed with death and decay. The monster is composed of body parts taken from mouldy vaults and bloody charnel houses. And the outcome is no less revolting than these origins. The monster's hands are in "color and apparent texture like [those] of a mummy." Its face has an expression of "loathsome yet appalling hideousness." It is generally "uncouth and distorted in its proportions."[36] Furthermore, just as the monster denies human aesthetic expectations by these perceptible qualities (which are emblematic of reason's ugliness), it also rebuts any assumptions about the predictability of its character. It is much stronger than ordinary men, but it is devoid of direction in the use of its force. At times it is benevolent and sentimental, as when it helps the De Lacey family anonymously by gathering supplies of firewood; at other times, it commits horrendous acts of murder without showing any sign of emotion and remorse. In its interactions, it shifts unexpectedly from a rhetoric of pleading to one of threat. Overall, one gets the impression that it cannot be governed--not even by itself.

Frankensteinian, disfigured reason produces its own unruly Otherness, with which it becomes increasingly unable to communicate. We can see, then, Mary Shelley and Kant as presenting us with opposing visions of human rationality. If for Kant reason (both as understanding and as practical) is a faculty marked by its uniform functioning and clarity of rules, for Mary Shelley reason is obscure and contingent. If for Kant the historical emergence of reason signifies the advent of illumination and human self-reliance, for Mary Shelley the dominance of reason means a new human powerlessness and disorientation. If for Kant reason propagates unconditioned goodness, for Mary Shelley

it is swarming with malignity. If for Kant reason is able to arrest human inclinations and animality, for Mary Shelley it is reason itself that is desirous and capricious. But perhaps these reversals are part of the even more consequential reversal the novel exemplifies.

In *Frankenstein* we witness a turn-about in the power relations between creator and created--and, by implication, between moderns and their civilization. As we have seen, the novel begins with a creator who is confident in his progressive ability to constitute and doctor his environment. In the course of the novel, this confidence is transformed into despair as the monster strangles Frankenstein's best friend, his young brother, and his beloved wife. As his world is being shattered, the creator experiences humiliation, the threat of subjection at the hands of his own artifact. "Slave," the monster tells Frankenstein, "I before reasoned with you, but you have proved yourself unworthy of my condescension. Remember that I have power; you believe yourself miserable, but I can make you so wretched that the light of day will be hateful to you. You are my creator, but I am your master; obey!"[37] This subjection of the creator to his offspring and *Doppelgänger* should be seen as symbolizing a uniquely modern, post-Natural Law consciousness. Together with hyper-order theorists, *Frankenstein* betrays a feeling that the world established by moderns has settled into paths that could destroy its founders. It is hopeless to attempt to disobey the commands of the overwhelming, degrading reality we have constituted. In this respect the novel serves as a mirror image to Kant, who trusted that Nature had willed that man "produce everything from himself . . . as if she aimed more at his rational *self-esteem* than at his well-being."[38]

III.   *Overcoming the Doubles*

Mary Shelley's apocalyptic conclusion was an exception at the time--a privilege of the novelist, perhaps, and one denied to the social and political theorist. For most continental theorists from the late eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries, the malaise inherent in the modern social matrix had a solution, whether at present or in the future, for the community or the individual. These "proto-entrapment" writers, as they could be termed, *identified* the normalization, other-dependency, fragmentation of experience, and other dehumanizing threats that were to haunt their twentieth-century followers; they maintained, nevertheless, the prospect of overcoming existing social conditions through deliberate human action. Since it is not germane to my topic, I shall not go into a survey of how the challenge of entrapment was confronted at that time. For heuristic purposes, however, I will point out the two main strategies these theorists espoused by constructing ideal types. These, inevitably, involve oversimplified generalizations which no author fully matches. (Some theorists even combined elements of both ideal types, particularly Rousseau.)

First, writers such as Rousseau, Kant, Marx, and to a lesser extent Hegel embraced a polarized language. On the one hand, they portrayed humans as being or having been mired in complete subjection to and alienation from their social institutions. But they countered this gloomy assessment with contemplations of a time when humans could become or are becoming the masters of these institutions. Men and women could coexist with their surroundings in freedom and harmony, even if this ideal could only be

approximated in practice. This strategy sought to constitute the identity of the self through a redefinition of its relation to collective institutions: it posited in space a unity and mutual reflection between them, a solid block in the void, as it were.

As against this solution, which has a necessary *communal* component, writers such as Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Nietzsche urged us to rebuff crystallizing normalization through the cultivation of authenticity and difference. As impersonal modes of conduct and thought penetrated modern society, so did the urgent flight towards expressive individualism. In lieu of engagement with and transformation of social institutions, this strategy highlighted the construction of a distinct self that would remain outside these institutions—or at least one that would be immune to their effects. Though these writers recognized the historic and generic role of man as the creator of civilization, they stressed even more the role of the individual as creator of himself.

1.   *The Move Outward*

In the history of political thought, Rousseau and Kant hold a unique place for their development of the notion of human freedom as autonomy. The former is credited for first declaring that "obedience to the law one had prescribed for oneself is liberty."[39] In determining this law, Rousseau argues, we must accept a point of view that transcends immediate desires and self-centeredness: autonomy calls for an act of self-distancing. Kant followed by contending that will translates into practice what our own practical reason

has determined to be the right course of action. The faculty of will is needed not for observing an external code that we recognize as binding, nor for materializing a personal end, but rather for ensuring adherence to the moral rules originating in ourselves. Autonomy does not imply arbitrariness, but only that what human beings themselves find morally justified is an objectively valid ground for morality; we must still be able to account for our procedures of determining and our motivations for heeding self-formed rules. Hence liberty as autonomy is not a passive "state" but an activity: it necessitates reasoning, judgment, and the overcoming of internal obstacles such as egoism, desires, laziness, or fear. But as long as our prescriptions conflict with the structure and rationale of social institutions, our autonomy is bound to be confined, our freedom frustrated.

This notion of autonomy and the view of the self associated with it has no doubt galvanized many calls for radical social change, or for "total revolution," as Bernard Yack puts it. Yack thinks that the positive valuation of this human potential allowed little patience with obstacles to its realization. He therefore sees the Rousseauian-Kantian conceptual invention—together with the view of social institutions as interdependent and composing a cohesive totality—as constitutive of the critical mode of thinkers as diverse as Schiller and Marx, Nietzsche and Rousseau.

> The Rousseauian-Kantian understanding of human freedom introduces a new way of viewing the failings of social institutions: institutions that do not in some way embody our freedom to define our own ends strip us of our humanity. And the failure of social institutions to recognize and embody our humanity is seen as *the* obstacle to a human life only when all social phenomena are viewed as part of an interdependent whole. If the same spirit of social interaction informs all institutions and individual action there will be no "human" sphere of society into which we can escape to develop our humanity.[40]

Yack's study clearly echoes Isaiah Berlin's insight about the role of positive liberty in political theories since the late eighteenth century. Berlin has suggested that writers such as Rousseau, Kant, and Marx started by dividing the self into lower and higher components (e.g., the individual ruled by *amour propre* vs. the republican citizen governed by general will) and continued by contending that only the attainment of the higher, moral self would allow us to be truly human and to realize our essence. This opened the way for revolutionary and totalitarian theories that alleged to have found the proper social and political configuration to ensure the attainment of the desired self.[41]

Yet one can also reverse the argument of Berlin and Yack. The conceptualizing of the self's humanity as conditioned upon the exercise of autonomy might be a *solution* to the discontent with modernity no less than its cause. If moderns, as I have suggested above, have been primarily preoccupied with a struggle against the uncontrollable civilization they have brought about, then autonomy and positive liberty may have *originally* been part of a conceptual scheme whose aim was to resolve this agonism. These concepts allowed the redefinition of relations between the members of a society and their economy, political institutions, and shared public spaces, and the envisioning of an orchestrated subjection of the double to human needs and pot...tials. (In Rousseau, liberty as autonomy is conceptualized in the same work in which he suggests the social contract, and by then his critique of modernity was well-established.) Once autonomy is postulated as a *shared* human capacity, identity can be expanded outward: it becomes reflected in the makeup of social institutions, engulfing what has been a distant Otherness. Rather than imposing upon us an oppressive hyper-order, then, the social world could closely echo and affirm our humanity.

Exercising autonomy requires that we see ourselves anew. As solely particular selves, each immersed in his or her contingent self-interest, we cannot be mirrored by our legal code, political structure, economic mode of production. Their forms may or may not coincide with our momentary interest, but from our subjective point of view they are always external and arbitrary: a reality to get along with, nothing more. And we are bound to feel the same distance from the shared social structure if we accentuate the differences of character or nature among us, since then no communal reality could express us in concert. Hence theorists who envisioned the overcoming of the double as dependent upon social unity, also tended to valorize autonomy as an essential human attribute that has a universalist dimension.

We should form a *supra-individual self*, or a fundamental bond and similarity among selves, if social institutions are to incarnate rules that have originated in all of us equally. Both Rousseau's general will and Kant's practical reason serve this function. While Hegel criticizes the notion of complete transparency among individuals and between them and their socio-economic reality, pointing out the place of contingency and conflict within the confines of civil society, he is driven by the same longing for reconciliation between self and society (or history). He considers citizenship an essential vehicle for this reconciliation. "It is only as one of its [the state's] members that the individual has objectivity, genuine individuality, and ethical life. *Unification* pure and simple is the true content and aim of the individual, and the individual's destiny is the living of the universal life" [my emphasis].[42]

But it is Marx who makes the dependency of control upon unity and shared identity most

explicit. As atomized, particularized beings, he argues, the workers encounter the oscillations of capitalist markets and the class stratification as mere accidents "over which they, as separate individuals, have no control. . . ."[43] But by intentional communality, by embracing their class identity, the proletariat could alter this predicament. "Communism differs from all previous movements in that it overturns the basis of all earlier relations of production and intercourse, and for the first time consciously treats all natural premises as the creatures of men, strips them of their natural character and subjugates them to the power of individuals united."[44] This subjection involves a revolution in the existing relations of production, a termination of the arbitrary and fixed division of labor, an introduction of new forms of communal decision-making, and the like. Underlying this political and social transformation is an ardent injunction that nothing shall exist external to human beings, that created and creator shall be united, that ultimate wholeness reigns.[45]

> The reality, which Communism is creating, is precisely the real basis for rendering it impossible that anything should exist independently of individuals, in so far as things are only a product of the preceding intercourse of individuals themselves.[46]

Marx thinks that in order to defeat the Otherness of civilization and nature we must not only transmute the present, but must first reexamine our relation to the past. Only a change of perspectives on the totality of human endeavors hitherto could foster the audacity needed for becoming fully autonomous. As Marx says, we should learn to view the world we inhabit as the outcome of past human actions (including the inventive transformation of nature), which were carried out by men and women who were perhaps not able to embody the apex of humanity, but who are related to us nevertheless. Only

then can we view this social world as belonging fully to us, and as being susceptible to further *designed* modifications. Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, and Marx theorize differing historical accounts of how the present has been formed; what unites them, however, is the recognition that only by surmounting the epistemic gulf that inclines us to see the modern social landscape as foreign and contingent will we be able to transform it, or at least be at peace with it. When our authorship of the social world is demonstrated and internalized, this world ceases to be a towering and reified reality, and hyper-order is revealed as a stage in a meaningful and necessary historical path--rather than as a product of capricious, depersonalized history.

The strategy of outward expansion requires (at least in Kant, Hegel, and Marx) a dual understanding of time and history. First, there is a long teleological development that may even contain an eschatological promise. The passing of time at this stage embodies a dialectic or linear progress: beneficial alternations cannot be halted because of mechanisms such as unsocial sociability, the cunning of reason, or historical materialism. But this strategy implicitly postulates also another type of time, whether real or ideal. Similarity among selves--and the correspondence between them and their offspring--calls for the introjection, at the zenith of history, of a certain semi-static time. Any radical modification in the defining features of the individual's identity or in social institutions would introduce a new rift between creator and created. Prolonged consonance calls then for the flattening of time, for rendering it horizontal.

2.   *Bounding the Self within a Space of Difference*

Fulfilling our autonomy allows for collective sway over social institutions. Yet this mastery is achieved by a universalization of our identity and hence may be understood as enhancing the very uniformity and sameness that are already imposed upon us through the economy, the state bureaucracy, the shared social spaces. If I might gain freedom only by joining a society governed by a general will or by affirming an identical practical reason, then my freedom could be false, a relinquishment of my selfhood rather than the formation of a substantive one. The second strategy for overcoming doubleness therefore confronts the social matrix not through an act of inclusivity, but by the cultivation of authenticity and distinctiveness; our human worth no longer presupposes transcending our particularity since it is dependent upon the aesthetic exploration of this particularity. The valorization of individual difference and authenticity intensified the critiques of modernity, but at the same time this valorization could be conceived (similarly to freedom as autonomy) as a conceptual answer to the quandary of the doubles.

The menace of Otherness and of a homogenizing world might be mitigated by the formation of a distinct identity that has internal order and cohesion. History may lack an immanent plan and import, and the collective remolding of the shared social space could be a mirage. But the ills of civilization remain external to a self that is well aware of itself as a *self-formed wholeness*. This self does not see social institutions as a domain to which it is inherently connected, and which it must both render subject and merge with;

nor does it experience itself as divided between a moral core that embodies its humanity and a part that is absorbed in the formation of civilization. No, the self resisting the forces of homogenization and the experience of alienation is complete and well-demarcated. "A living thing," writes Nietzsche, "can be healthy, strong, and fruitful only when bounded by a horizon."[47] Lionel Trilling sees the drive to form such a bounded self as originating with Schiller, Wordsworth, and Rousseau. These three, he suggests, "are not concerned with energy directed outward upon the world in aggression and dominance, but, rather, with such energy as contrives that the center shall hold, that the circumference of the self keep unbroken, that the person be an integer, impenetrable, perdurable and autonomous in being if not in action."[48]

The concern with an "impenetrable" self runs through much of Rousseau's writings, especially *Emile* and *The Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. In the latter work, Rousseau elucidates this notion of the self by juxtaposing the modern self with the savage. As we saw above, he thinks the civilized self has lost its *"sentiment de l'existence,"* deriving its sense of being and worth from the approving gaze of others. Moderns are attuned to external expectations imposed through interactions in public spaces, and they are therefore deaf to authentic internal feelings and needs. The Rousseauian savage lives a bounded existence, yet this type of self is devoid of significant distinctiveness; differences of character and identity, of course, could be developed only within a shared social context. To thwart the normalizing forces of modernity we must be able to visualize an impenetrable self here and now—not as something irrevocably lost or that can be reenacted only through a secluded existence and education such as Emile's.

Herder, a contemporary of Rousseau, exemplifies the same quest. He views difference as a given, and yet as one that requires individual cultivation over a life time. "[T]he new creature," he writes, "is but the realization of a *latent idea* that was inherent in creative and forever actively thinking nature" [my emphasis].[49] The core of identity that resides within me develops through an internal energy that animates my person. As a sentient being I have a vital power that is "innate, organic, and genetic," and which is "the inner genius of my being." External influences and material cease to be ominous for Herder, since they are shaped by this force that stamps everything with each individual's uniqueness. "Whatever the influences of the [external] climate," he writes, "every man, every animal, every plant, has its own climate. For every living being absorbs all the external influences in a manner peculiar to itself and modifies them according to its own organic power."[50]

Man is the singular creator of himself, and he finds his freedom through this ongoing creation. Charles Taylor suggests that Herder develops an "anthropology of expressivism" according to which a human life is the embodiment of an idea, whose meaning one has both to clarify and to define.[51] Identity reflects what was pregiven as well as the path one embarks upon in articulating the original idea. This path must be unique and suitable for me, since to exchange my realization with that of another "is to lead myself to distortion and self-mutilation."[52] My dignity is conditioned upon my ability to form beliefs, conduct, character, and feelings that have their source in me without being an imitation of others; only if I can see myself in the forms inhabiting my life can I be certain that the malignant forces of sameness have remained external to me, that I am not a porous being.

The division and alienation that moderns feel in the face of their collective creations is alleviated by emphasizing that we are the creators and the thing created, that both are united in a single human life. The articulation of distinctiveness aims at wholeness and order within the self, not within the global, historical-communal domain. This expressive project also involves a quest for a kind of autonomy, only one that is based on singularity, not on universalization; one aesthetic in its aims, not morally oriented; one that aspires for unity, not for the partitioning of the self. Herder, Humboldt, Schiller and others urge us to generate harmony between reason and feelings, desires and will, imagination and perception, body and soul. The diversity of human faculties does not call for perpetual antagonism but for complementary unity. "The true end of Man," writes Humboldt, "is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole."[53] Schiller theorizes the aesthetic dimension of this quest for internal harmony, averring that our humanity is expressed in a *Spieltrieb* (play drive) that allows our faculties of form and contemplation on the one hand and perception and feeling on the other to come together. "In the enjoyment of beauty, or aesthetic unity, an actual union and interchange between matter and form, passivity and activity, momentarily takes place."[54] At these moments, the active, imposing form itself invokes the experience of enjoyment, and hence feelings stop being a mere reaction to sense data. This healing event in which our separate faculties are conjoined is seen by Schiller as morally neutral, yet as necessary for harmonious existence, and hence also for the proper use of the rational will. "[T]here is no other way of making sensuous man rational," he writes, "except by first making him aesthetic."[55]

The demand for a bounded individuality finds exemplary articulation in Nietzsche, who

both continues and breaks away from the Herderian legacy. To begin with, Nietzsche

agrees with his predecessors that human dignity commands the independent formation of

internal order. "This is a parable for each one of us: he must organize the chaos within

him by thinking back to his real needs."[56] To vanquish the inward, identity-related chaos,

one has to become engaged in a twofold operation. First, one must weed out anything that

has been implanted within, anything that is being repeated without thinking and criticism,

anything that is being accepted through membership in a democratic herd. We are inclined

to embrace the ethos of this herd, with its fear of deviance and its existential laziness; to

regain self-respect and appreciation for our lives we must cease to "seem like factory

products."[57]

Next, the shaping of oneself calls for an uninhibited expression of one's will to power.

By this Nietzsche does not seem to mean a will that dominates others. To will power

entails assuming responsibility for one's life and asserting abundance, vitality, and

singularity. "The individual," he writes, "is something completely new and creating anew,

something absolute, all his actions entirely his own."[58] Strong individuals "want to form

and no longer to have anything foreign about themselves."[59] This imperative of original

self-generation—of values, conduct, style—is so important to Nietzsche that he even urges

us to affirm those contingent events of the past whose imprints we invariably bear; in

other words, we should master the effects of time. This yes-saying turns past events from

being mere accidents and impositions into something we willed; they are experienced as

our own, rather than as something foreign that needs to be expunged from memory.

Nietzsche even sees the formation of strong individuals or overmen (*Übermenschen*) as

the achievement that could render the tragic history of Western culture worthwhile. He

emphatically rejects the notion that the meaning of history is the collective reconciliation between human beings and civilization. Instead, he writes that "the *goal of humanity* cannot lie in its end but only *in its highest exemplars.*"[60]

While in his quest of a bounded identity Nietzsche builds on the Herderian tradition, he departs from it on a crucial issue: for Nietzsche the notion of innate genius or pregiven idea is an ontological fiction, a genealogical impossibility, and a psychological hazard. Nietzsche's epistemology presents truth as perspective-dependent and as motivated by the will to power. He therefore denies a privileged position from which valid ontological claims could be postulated. Moreover, human identity is so complex, that it is practically impossible to decipher its inner depth and arrive at some core. A man is clouded, even to himself. "He is a thing dark and veiled; and if the hare has seven skins, man can slough off seventy times seven and still not be able to say: 'this is really you, this is no longer outer shell.'" Finally, a person who believes that his humanity and dignity depend upon the authentic articulation of a unique nature is harnessing himself, psychologically and existentially. Instead of transgressing what has been given by nature or insinuated through culture, this person remains committed to their constitutive effect. To such a person Nietzsche cries: "your true nature lies, not concealed deep within you, but immeasurably high above you."[61]

IV.   *From Proto-Entrapment to Entrapment Theories*

Fixed beginnings are viewed today with suspicion, especially those that coincide with a

transition from one century to another. Yet with Weber and Freud, I would like to argue,

a new understanding of modernity and of the self's position within it does emerge.

Suddenly, modern culture and institutions seem to become weightier, inescapable, fixed

in their exteriority. The self is called to forego a yearning for collective or individual

transcendence, to accept its immurement within social reality and history. For these and

other twentieth-century writers, the two strategies of overcoming the quandary of the

doubles have failed: it is impossible to reorganize social institutions in a way that will

render us autonomous and free, and the construction of a bounded self is an illusion given

the unconscious workings of internalized social norms. There are of course many

contemporary theorists who do not accept this pessimism--Marcuse and Habermas come

to mind. Nevertheless, Weber and Freud have helped to shape contemporary

consciousness by arguing that discontent is constitutive of the modern or over-civilized

predicament, that our victories over the forces of normalization are inescapably partial and

transitory, and that we must confront this predicament with a new realism and prudence.

These issues will be explored in depth in the next chapters, but I would like to provide

here a description of the transition from proto-entrapment to entrapment theorists.

Analyzing Weber's critique of Marx and Nietzsche offers a succinct way to reveal the

nature of this transition. First, however, two general reasons for Weber's departure from

nineteenth-century thought should be mentioned.

With Weber a new type of self makes its appearance on the Western landscape: the "trapped" self. Individuals who dwell within the "iron cage" do not assume that a radical break with the present configuration of modernity is likely, nor do they pattern their lives in a search for such a break. They forego the idea of revolutionizing prevailing social institutions and the values underpinning them because they view the existing social and economic cosmos as too powerful, complex, and fragmented for such remolding. Weber depicts the forces that push towards calculable and rationalized human action, specialization, the shrinking of personal horizons, economic growth, and bureaucratization as too overwhelming. This sense of helplessness is also enhanced by the fragmentation that gradually inheres in the progress of civilization: Weber contends that conflict is increasing among value spheres (e.g., the economic and the aesthetic), and among the laws and demands each sphere posits to the self. The independence and distinctiveness of each sphere, argues Weber, proves that human reality is not answerable to any one governing principle—be it theological, economic, historicist-idealist, or historic-genetic. No determining factor can be manipulated to bring about the birth of a new era. (With a different conceptual scheme, Foucault would explore this position of anti-ubiquity to its ultimate conclusions. If Yack is correct in suggesting that presupposing an interrelation among social institutions is a central characteristic of nineteenth-century social and political critics, then Weber designates the collapse of this vista.)

Another reason that Weber relinquishes the quest for radical social change is that he lacks a clear, unequivocal ontological vision of the self. This essential precondition is also absent in the two other entrapment theorists studied in this work, Freud and Foucault. While Weber clearly had some underlying essentialist notions about the self, without

which he could not have depicted the modern age in such bleak terms, his philosophical anthropology with its underlying presuppositions about the self as an hermeneutical creature remains hidden. Moreover, this anthropology attributes to the contingencies of history a central place in shaping the self. Weber's preferred self, the "personality," has Protestant origins, and is marked by the aspiration for maximal projection of its core ethical values in daily life. Yet even this self is explicitly denied any superior moral status in relation to other types of selves--either within or outside Western culture. While Weber, in contrast to Freud and Foucault, maintains a moral language in discussing the self, his conception (like Freud's) is too elastic and historicist to be translated into an ideology or theory that would propel individuals to pursue a social or moral revolution. His proclaimed philosophical position can be characterized as Nietzschean perspectivism without the ontology of the will to power: any philosophical method (as he says of historical materialism) is only one outlook among numerous possible others, and it is always conditioned upon one's presuppositions. This standpoint cannot yield a credible foundation for demanding a radical transformation of one's environment, as Weber certainly realized.

The departure of Weber from nineteenth-century solutions to the problem of entrapment is manifested in his complex relation to Marx and Nietzsche. Weber's view of these two great nineteenth-century figures is demonstrated by a familiar story, according to which he once said that

> the honesty of a present-day scholar, and above all a present-day philosopher, can be measured by his attitude to Nietzsche and Marx. Whoever does not admit that considerable parts of his work could not have been carried out in the absence of the work of these two, only fools

himself and others. The world in which we spiritually and intellectually
live today is a world substantially shaped by Marx and Nietzsche.[62]

Weber's attitude towards Marx has been lately reevaluated.[63] In the past, he was perceived as a champion of an "idealist" interpretation of history in general and of modern capitalism in particular, thus proposing a counter-view to Marx's historical materialism. However, contemporary literature has unravelled many of the ethical sensibilities and even methodology shared by these two theorists. Most important perhaps is the realization, to be expanded on below, that Weber extended Marxian themes from the context of the factory to include modern institutions as a whole: armies, corporations, state bureaucracies, universities, party machines and so forth. By utilizing Marx's analysis of capitalist relations of production, Weber argues that in each of these sites the concentration of ownership over the particular relevant means results in disciplinary conduct and the impersonalization of human interaction, in objectification and the loss of freedom, and finally, in the frustration of any attempt at achieving a sense of meaning. Weber also shares with Marx (and Freud) the insight that work is an essential activity for the modern individual, though his intellectual and spiritual sources in this matter do not derive from Marx.[64]

Nevertheless, Weber departs from Marx in his exploration of the potential routes of escape from the snares of modernity. Marxism, according to Weber, professes that a Communist society will mark the end of the "domination of people by things" and of *"all domination of man over man."*[65] This vision, of absolute control over objects and of the demolishing of control among men and women is perceived by Weber as a twofold

illusion. Firstly, collective ownership over the means of production (or office) alters neither the basic circumstances of the individual, who still has to adjust to a given function within the existing division of labor, nor the situation of the specialist, who operates in an ethical-neutral environment and with little control over the nature of her work. Marx's hopes as expressed in *The German Ideology*, for a well-rounded and versatile individual who fully commands her environment, are a mirage. Secondly, as for people's domination over each other, "it is the dictatorship of the official, not that of the worker, which, at present anyway, is on the advance,"[66] and in socialist society this trend is only likely to escalate. With Weber, the sober realization that the socio-economic world is immune to human autonomy dawns on the modern psyche. From their origins as servants of human needs, rationalized contemporary institutions take on an independent existence and become ends in themselves, with humans serving their ends. For Weber, as Löwith says, this reversal

> marks the whole of modern civilization, whose arrangements, institutions and activities are so 'rationalized' that whereas humanity once established itself within them, now it is they who enclose and determine humanity like an 'iron cage.' Human conduct, from which these institutions originally arose, must now in turn adapt to its own creations which have escaped the control of their creator.[67]

What contributes to Weber's pessimistic outlook is his understanding of history as both chaotic and linear. From a specific constellation of contingent factors, history proceeds linearly in a certain direction until it is diverted to a different course by an unforeseeable factor, most often a new religious belief. (Modern capitalism, as Weber contends in *General Economic History*, results from the combination of diverse factors such as the

bureaucratic state, calculable law, citizenship, book keeping methods, and a business ethic that does not distinguish between community members and outsiders.)[68] But *precisely because history does not have a "plan"* (and Weber rejects any notion of historical determinism), there is nothing to interrupt the indefinite amplification of instrumental and formal rationality. This fusion of order and disorder, of "arbitrary linearism," inserts a new sense of doom into the post-teleological consciousness, and marks the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century by reinvigorating a concern with the uninterrupted expansion of hyper-order.

Yet the difference between Weber and Marx goes even deeper. For Marx, the ramifications of the capitalist system of production were both the scarcity of essential goods and the impeding of human creative and productive potentials. Human beings are makers, creative producers who express themselves through interaction with nature. By engaging in "estranged labor," man, who is a "conscious being, makes his life activity, his *being (Wesen)*, a mere means for his *existence.*"[69] In contrast, Weber views the central problem of modernity to be that it gives birth to a new type of person, to "specialists without soul, hedonists without heart"; it brings about, in other words, a problem of meaninglessness. Marx's anthropology propelled him to conceptualize the dehumanization of modernity chiefly in terms of the arrest of the productive capacities and overall advancement of humans; Weber's anthropology led him to see dehumanization in the frustration of any attempt to establish horizons of significance, and in the shrinking space within which an individual might act upon his or her "ultimate values" or vision of the good. Even if socialism were to succeed in introducing different notions of distributive justice, insists Weber, it is not likely to provide new sources of

collective meaning, or to inject ethical significance into specialized work within rationalized mass-organizations. Consequently, he could not see socialism as a solution to the modern predicament. But if Marx was wrong in advising individuals to immerse themselves in the collective transformation of objective conditions, Nietzsche, according to Weber, made the opposite mistake of advocating false withdrawal.

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Marx yearned for a socio-economic revolution, Nietzsche for a circumscribed identity with transfigured values. The crisis of European society for Nietzsche is one not of objective social and economic institutions, but of culture and beliefs. One reason for this social breakdown is that the "will to truth" consumed itself, just as the attempt to elicit meaning from the world did. In fact, Weber and Nietzsche seem to share a basic insight about human motivations. Man, says Nietzsche, has become "a fantastic animal that has to fulfil one more condition of existence than any other animal: man *has* to believe, to know, from time to time *why* he exists; his race cannot flourish without a periodic trust in life—without faith in *reason in life*."[70] Yet once the search for theological explanations has been frustrated, human life becomes tumultuous and incomprehensible. "Is there still up or down? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space?"[71] Modern individuals are forced to acknowledge not only the death of God, but also the impoverishment of Nature, History, and Reason, each of which fails now to establish a scheme for an orderly, meaningful world.

This historical moment of European nihilism is unprecedented, and calls for a new type

of human being: one able to say "yes" to the world despite its emptiness and purposelessness, one able to establish an ordered and distinct identity in the face of chaotic surroundings. The overman does not remain in the void, but forges new evaluations instead of accepting the baseless Judaeo-Christian ones. Nietzsche bids us to pursue the *"creation of our own new tables of what is good"*--tables, however, that are more aesthetic than ethical. They cannot be perceived in "objective," universal categories, such as that of the right and just action; rather, they are measured by their originality, creativity, beauty, depth, or the exertion they command. We *"want to become those we are*--human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves."[72] When it dawns on the self that it, too, is only a will to power, it expresses this recognition by a Dionysian and vitalic generation of new interpretations and perspectives, and through this it is able to overcome nihilism and the moral quest for certainty that brought this state about. The overman's interpretations, like the will to power, are destined to be ever-changing and contingent; but it is precisely the transitory nature of oneself and the universe that he is able not only to bear but to celebrate as his own. Thus, each moment in which the overman must confront the void is yet another opportunity to overcome himself and his nihilistic, all too human, tendencies--and this moment recurs eternally.

To Nietzsche, then, the European malaise--morbidity and hatred of life, guilt and slave morality, nihilism, the desperate search for fixed truths through science, and so forth--is the conclusion of a singular evolution of a culture and civilization that has turned upon its members, annihilating their very desire and respect for life. Yet this decaying culture cannot be confronted and prevailed upon by collective means, political or otherwise; only

unique, strong, and circumscribed individuals may accomplish this task. As the condition of European society becomes more despairing, Nietzsche is the more strongly convinced that for the overman a new existential reality, not contaminated by the predominant values and conception of man, is destined to come.

Now Weber agrees with Nietzsche that each modern individual should be able to establish values for himself, "to decide which is God for him and which is the devil."[73] Like Nietzsche, he thinks there is no exterior guide in such choices, and no force from within that impels us in a certain direction. Yet while both point to the formation of a "strong" identity, there are important differences between the two writers. We can approach some of these differences through Weber's discussion of the prospects for democracy in Germany (1917). There he condemns those who explore their individuality by setting themselves apart "from the 'far too many,' as is maintained by the various and misconceived 'prophecies' which go back to Nietzsche." On the contrary, Weber says, if a person is to preserve his "dignity," he must do it *"in the midst of a democratic world"* [my emphasis].[74] "Inner distance" is a desirable quality in a person, but one that should be achieved through engagement and immersion in the existing social institutions--not by devaluation and departure from them. Weber could not share neither Nietzsche's denunciation of modern politics (especially not nationalist or liberal-democratic ones), nor his attitude towards science and capitalism.

What is true for democracy, then, holds for modernity as a whole: Weber's personality strives to independently constitute its identity around a normative core *within* the rationalized world, its given life-orders and value-spheres; in a word, it affirms modernity.

In Weber's time, Nietzsche's aesthetic self was adopted by the poet Stefan George and his circle, who were inspired by *Zarathustra* in their choice of social seclusion and the formation of a poetic-formalistic conception of life.[75] Weber thought that George's flight was flawed not only because it was materially available to just a small, elitist group, but also because this disengagement from contemporary life-orders could have only a marginal impact on the human predicament. Therefore from Weber's perspective, Nietzsche's work marks a dangerous move towards the valorization of inner experience and its expression in aesthetic forms at the exper.., of a confrontation with existing circumstances. This move towards subjectivist culture is characterized by Weber as "the refusal of modern men to assume responsibility for moral judgments"; instead, there is a tendency to "transform judgments of moral intents into judgments of taste ('in poor taste' instead of 'reprehensible')."[76]

While Weber realized that, after Nietzsche, no common foundation for moral judgments exists, nothing is more foreign than this aesthetic turn to his ascetic concept of the personality, which relentlessly espouses the norms and demands of its vocation, whether "objectivity" in science, "responsibility" in politics, and the like. The *Berufwelt* must be accepted as is: Weber adheres to the Protestant (and Jewish) tradition of affirming social reality, even if he discards the theological tenets that supported this view. Hence the Weberian self cannot be content with the Nietzschean, simplified notion of circumscribed identity, however pressing the need for such an identity may be; it must negotiate with the world, asserting itself only within existing social institutions and their objective claims.[77] Weber still searches eagerly for a well-defined selfhood that is echoed in the mundane, but he is aware of the limitations of this project, and he therefore also

deemphasizes the significance of the uniqueness of identity. Instead of striving for distinctiveness by living a life that is preoccupied with accumulating varied personal experiences and with the repeated reinventing of values, we should sustain a continuous course, morally and professionally. Zarathustra, like the prophets whom Weber studied, flees from or devalues the world as we know it; soberly and religiously, so to speak, the Weberian self remains within it.

Chapter Two:

Max Weber: Between Homo-Hermeneut and the "Lebende

Maschine"

Abbreviations

Texts:

ES   *Economy and Society*, eds. G. Roth and C. Wittich, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

FMW   *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. H. Gerth and C. Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946).

GARS   *Gesammelte Aufsätze Zur Religionssoziologie*, 3 vols., ed. J. Winckelmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1924).

GAW   *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, 3d edition, ed. J. Winckelmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1968).

GPS   *Gesammelte Politische Schriften*, 2d edition, ed. J. Winckelmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1958).

TMSS   *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, eds. E. Shils and H. Finch (New York: Free Press, 1949).

MWST   *Max Weber: Selections in Translation*, ed. W.G Runciman, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

WG   *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 4th edition, ed. J. Winckelmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1976).

Introduction

At the turn of the century, German philosophy both exhibited and helped to form a paradox that defined Western understanding of the self thereafter. While Nietzsche's philosophy of nihilism shattered the last hopes for religious and metaphysical consolation, thereby suggesting the possible meaninglessness of human existence, Dilthey called for the hermeneutic understanding of human beings, arguing that they should be distinguished from all other creatures and from nature because they are able to generate meaningful interpretations of their lives and of the cosmos. As Nietzsche's philosophy pointed to the evaporation of import from the world and from human existence itself, hermeneutic theory asserted that the dignity and fulfillment of human beings lie precisely in their ability to generate such import. Nowhere is the tension between these two positions more manifest than in Max Weber's work.

Under Nietzsche's influence, Weber argues for accepting the irreversible disenchantment (*Entzauberung*) of the world. It is generally overlooked, however, that this state suggests a problem only for a unique type of self. The threats of disenchantment, of a rationalized social environment, and of meaninglessness dominate Weber's work because he views human beings as creatures who yearn for meaning and are able to invent it. In fact, Weber accentuates the modern paradox of meaning, since he posits in the midst of a radically objectified world a self within whom the demand for hermeneutical existence reaches a totalizing, unprecedented height. This self (i.e., the "personality") emerged due to historical developments peculiar to the West, whereby a mixture of religious and psychological motivations gradually propelled the self to seek ethical import in all the

departments of its life. Since he situated the personality in social and natural environments that are devoid of such import, Weber was inescapably led to deem modernity as a snare. Conceptions of the self--rather than being a vehicle for liberation and a source of hope, as in the works of proto-entrapment writers--become in Weber and Freud a ground for a gloomy outlook.

The aim of this chapter is to explore how Weber constructs entrapment as a problem of a hollow and ethically barren mode of being. In the first section I argue that underlying Weber's project, particularly in his sociology of religion, are some essentialist convictions about human beings, the most important of which is a vision of humans as *homo-hermeneut*, as beings that require a meaningful existence. This vision plays a central role in Weber's depiction of how the self has been gradually constructed through its religious experience, both in the Occidental and Eastern traditions. This historical-anthropological narrative describes the progressive shaping of a self characterized by its individualized needs, its quest for inner cohesiveness and certainty, and its universalized moral code. Weber contends that the continuous theological rationalization and the unwavering assay to make sense of the world that characterizes human history leads from naturalism to the construction of interpretive edifices, and finally undermines the prospect of eliciting any import from the cosmos. Thus the contemporary Western crisis of meaninglessness has its origins in the internal movement of Occidental religions, and is aggravated by the self's existence within the objectifying environment of capitalism, bureaucracy, and science.

As noted, Weber suggests that the distinct, Western religious experience gave birth in the

West to the ascetic personality. This notion of the self is examined in section II. The greatest danger for this personality, in Weber's view, is the advent of modern techniques of discipline and the disappearance of ethical import from the realms of civil society and vocational life. As we shall see in section III, Weber's critique of contemporary society in general, and of discipline in particular, may become fully intelligible only after we have recognized that he approaches his studies with concern for the fate of a specific type of self; the disciplined self serves in his writings as the "double," or *doppelgänger*, of the personality. Weber's account of discipline is one of the earliest in contemporary literature, and while his insights are used by most subsequent studies of the subject, no systematic analysis of his views has been undertaken. A reconstruction of his observations about discipline reveals that he sees it as demanding the mechanical formation and adaptation of the self to a set of given external criteria, thereby rendering the forging of the "personality" an impossibility.

The last section explores the fate of the self in the fragmented and disenchanted world of modernity. Weber sees the contemporary self as situated among various and increasingly conflicting domains of action and value. This state generates a sense of purposelessness and incoherence, since it endangers the possibility of formulating guiding ethical principles and renders the preservation of unity in human life a tenuous project. (Although I do not discuss this here, Weber could can be seen as a paradigmatic modern theorist confronting a post-modern predicament.) Weber celebrates politics and the human sciences as two domains of activity that advance a partial response to this quandary: these activities help shield culture--the only available source of meaning in modernity--by guarding the identity of the nation and inquiring about its dilemmas and challenges. The

collective value of these endeavors is complemented by the rewards they offer to the participant, since they allow one to become a personality. Ways of life that do not support such a transfiguration of the self, especially the aesthetic and erotic, are rejected by Weber; the hermeneutic need can be answered only through involvement with inter-subjective projects and the assertion of the self through them, that is, through what I call below "redemptive realism." As Marianne Weber writes in explaining the context of Weber's life, those who "had abandoned the old gods without turning to socialism or to the aristocracy of artistry [Nietzscheanism] felt that they were in 'freedom's empty space.'"[1] Insofar as Weber addressed himself to anyone, it was to those in this "empty space," suggesting to them a Sisyphean self that relentlessly strives to cultivate a set of "ultimate values" to guide its actions in a rule-governed and impersonal environment.

I.   *Weber's Anthropology*

The anthropological interpretation of Weber's work was first suggested by Wilhelm Hennis in his *Max Weber: Essays in Reconstruction* (1988).[2] Hennis argues that Weber was primarily interested in studying different types of human conduct and character and the ways these are conditioned by various life-orders. Hennis's work is probably the single most important contribution to Weberian scholarship during the last two decades, since he uncovers Weber's strong normative concerns, successfully discrediting interpretations of Weber (e.g., Bendix, Habermas)[3] that portray him as chiefly a theorist

of rationalization and modernization. Nevertheless, Hennis and those who followed him fail to notice the essentialist, hermeneutical presuppositions in Weber's anthropology. This is not an insignificant omission, since without these presuppositions, it seems to me, Weber's discontent with modernity does not make sense.

The convictions that underlie Weber's anthropology can perhaps be best reconstructed from his studies in the sociology of religion. These include Weber's well-known work on Protestantism, as well as individual texts on ancient Judaism, Confucianism and Taoism, and Buddhism and Hinduism.[4] The best summaries of his main themes occur in two essays from *"Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen"*: *"Einleitung"* and *"Zwischenbetrachtung"* (1915), and both will be central to my interpretation of Weber.[5] It is important to note that these works were written in different periods of Weber's life, and should be seen in the contexts in which they were composed. Nevertheless, they do have much in common, and what Weber says in *ES* is true for all of his studies in the sociology of religion. There he says that the intention of the study is not to provide an overall understanding of religion and its "essence" but to "study the conditions and effects of a particular type of social action." That is, to conduct the inquiry from "the viewpoint of the subjective experience, ideas and purposes of the individual concerned--in short-- from the point of religious behavior's meaning (*Sinn*)."[6] Because they explore the inner lives of human beings, as well as because of their comparative scope and complexity, these works seem to provide a good foundation for uncovering Weber's anthropological claims, which he never clearly articulated or systematized.

Any reader of the "Author's Introduction" (*Vorbemerkung*) for the *GARS* collection may

think that the *distinguishing* characteristic of Western civilization and culture is its tendency toward rationalization.[7] This disposition for rationality has resulted in the development of modern capitalism, science and technology, unique forms of art and music, the formal-bureaucratic organization of society and state, and other phenomena. For Weber, however, rationality has many meanings and can take various directions, among which the Western ones are only a particular option. Rationality, in fact, is not culturally specific, but likely to be part of human life as such. "For the rationality, in the sense of logical 'consistency' of an intellectual-theoretical or practical-ethical attitude, has and always has had power [*Gewalt*] over man, however limited and unstable this power is and always has been in the face of other forces of historical life."[8]

Often, as in the passage above, Weber uses rationality in the sense of consistency or "systematic arrangement," a quest for order and inter-connection among various phenomena such as natural events, ideas, and human conduct.[9] It is a form of thought that by itself is empty and can be imposed on any domain of life. Yet in each case, the *motivation for this rationalization must be pre-existent*: a quest for mastery of the natural environment, a need for a meaningful interpretation of the world, or strongly held religious convictions. Therefore, if we would like to understand what steers rationalization in any particular direction, a deeper inquiry into the inner-motivations of human beings is necessary. Here we find that what underlies any such path of systematization are "interests." Weber uses this word in a very broad and ambiguous sense, and it includes both material or this-worldly interests (e.g., health, long life, wealth) and ideal ones (e.g., salvation or understanding of one's predicament in the world). However, while each interest may point to a distinct form of rationalization of thought and conduct, the

question of how the interests themselves are being formulated remains open. Interests, while inherently very potent, do not exist abstractly, but are shaped within broader horizons of significance. "Not ideas," writes Weber, "but material and ideal interests govern directly man's conduct. Yet, very frequently, the 'world images' [*Weltbilder*] that have been created by 'ideas' have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interests."[10]

We can grasp the origin and meaning of a particular interest for a person only if we understand the overall background and complex of meaning within which it has been conceived. To be sure, the relation between interests and world images is not uni-directional. Religion (as a world image) has an "elective affinity" with the "interest situation" of the class from which it originated.[11] Intellectuals are inclined to embrace contemplative religions and to relentlessly construct a coherent and comprehensive view of reality, as exemplified by Buddhism and Hinduism. Civic strata—artisans, traders, and small entrepreneurs—are predisposed to espouse religions such as Protestantism, which approve of their occupations and may endow them with ethical significance. In short, the pre-existent interest situation of a certain stratum will be influential in its acceptance or rejection of a religion; and the given religion, in turn, is likely to both affirm and re-shape these pre-existent interests. However, such "elective affinity" does not always exist, and in any event it would be a crucial mistake to reduce religions and world-views to interest situations, as Marx did. The religious ethic, Weber insists, "receives its stamp primarily from religious sources," and "religious doctrines are adjusted to *religious needs*".[12]

The potency of religions in shaping history should be explained in light of their ability

to satisfy a need peculiar to the human species: the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual quest for meaning. Behind every religion of salvation "always lies a stand towards something in the world which is experienced as 'senseless.' Thus the demand has been implied: that the world order in its totality is, could, and should somehow be a meaningful cosmos."[13] We shall see below what precisely can be experienced as "senseless." But first we should note the decisive point Weber makes: *that human beings have the internal necessity, as well as the capacity, to interpret their lives and the cosmos as a whole in a meaningful way.* "Man," in other words, can be characterized as *homo-hermeneut.* The latter's quest to make sense of his life is neither the result of nor under the control of conscious and rational decision. Ratio is, of course, often the means employed in this project; but underlying the search for significance and import is an uncontrollable inner-force and compulsion, a desire, one which I suggest we call the desire for meaning.

The interpretations humans spawn of their lives and the world reveal varying degrees of complexity, generality, abstractness, and consistency, and begin with magical beliefs and practices. Magic, according to Weber, emerged from the wish to sway and manipulate the external and internal forces that shape human life--rain, war, illness, and so forth. The concern of magical religions was with the possible goods of *this world*, and an unwillingness to accept their seemingly arbitrary and unpredictable nature. With religions of salvation (i.e., all world religions except Confucianism), the wish is less to influence supra-natural entities than to make sense of the world from an ethical perspective.[14]

> All religions have demanded as a specific presupposition that the course
> of the world be somehow *meaningful*, at least in so far as it touches upon

the interests of men . . . [T]his claim naturally emerges first as the customary problem of unjust suffering and hence as the postulate of just compensation for the unequal distribution of individual happiness in the world.[15]

The exigency to which religions must answer is the human experience that the fate of individuals and collectivities on this earth is contingent, unequal, and often unjust. Elaborate hermeneutical schemes of the world commence from this basic and unalterable human condition. Indeed, this inner necessity for interpreting and comprehending one's fate is shared by all: the rich, powerful, and blessed individual "needs to know that he has a *right* to his good fortune";[16] the poor, the sick, and those who have suffered loss aspire to make sense of their unfortunate lot and look for alternative compensation, in this life or the life beyond. This latter group is naturally the most hospitable toward religions of salvation, though these religions do not necessarily originate among or limit themselves to members of this group.

The quest behind salvation is therefore rather similar among all religions, but its specific nature depends upon the overall world-view.[17] In *ES* Weber discusses numerous conceptions of salvation and soteriology, but in the "*Zwischenbetrachtung*" and "*Einleitung*" he reduces them to the two most rational-consistent ideal types: inner-worldly asceticism and other-worldly flight from terrestrial life.[18] Buddhism and Hinduism induce such flight from the world by leading the believer to *unia mystica*, a state in which he possesses the immanent holy through contemplation and thus becomes one with the cosmos. To that end, a certain conduct and attitude is demanded: detachment, passivity, and ultimate tranquility. This allows the believer to "empty" himself and to become a mere "vessel." Inner-worldly asceticism as practiced in

Protestantism leads in the opposite direction. Salvation is sought through mastering the world and making oneself into God's "tool." The believer must display God's glory in the world through continuous, methodical work and strict emotional and ethical self-control. One's vocation therefore attains religious significance, and success in the realm of the mundane is taken as a sign of salvation.

These diametrically opposed visions of mysticism and asceticism are the outgrowth of two specific paths of redemption rationalized to their extremes. Nevertheless, despite the differences, Weber argues that both evolve out of the same religious urgencies, and that the believer's hunger to be saved, once acted upon in an increasingly consistent way, tended to propel religions of salvation to follow three characteristic paths. First, the pursuit of redemption was progressively conceived in *individual* terms. The fate of the sib, clan, or local community could no longer be seen as directly and sufficiently related to that of the individual. Instead of these organic communities, new ones evolved which were founded on shared beliefs and were unfettered by personal commitments; the believer's salvation—rather than that of the group—was at stake, and this held for the Eastern mystic as well as for the Puritan.

Hand in hand with this individuation of salvation came the tendency to perceive salvation in terms of the inward, psychological needs of the devotee. The question was how to "put the follower into a *permanent* state which makes him inwardly safe against suffering."[19] To that end, both inner-worldly asceticism and other-worldly mysticism freed the believer from dependency upon institutions or collectivities in his search for redemption, and showed how a "holy state" might be attainable solely through the systematization of the

individual's conduct. (Both Nirvana and methodical work in a vocation proved to be more effective in this respect than, say, occasional acts of good works. However, from Weber's perspective, the Puritan's way seems preferable, since here salvation can be experienced continuously in the totality of the believer's daily life; the mystic's union with God, in contrast, is by its very nature less enduring. This seems to be one reason why Weber, in his effort to redeem the modern individual from the crisis of meaninglessness, took up the Puritan as the paradigmatic figure for his concept of personality. I shall discuss these issues in the next section.)

Finally, the sublimation of religions of salvation in the direction of individual, inward needs also brought about the universalization of ethical obligations. The rationalization of faith in a God led to a sense that guilt was the only reasonable explanation for the human condition of misery (especially in Christianity). However, this recognition of the "natural imperfections of all human doings including one's own" pointed in "the direction of universalist brotherhood, which goes beyond all barriers of societal associations . . . ."[20] Yet even in the ethical domain, what is at issue is the *salvation of the devotee*, not the well-being of the person to whom the charitable action is addressed. Weber identifies a unique ethical conception that evolved out of this concern for the self: the ethic of ultimate ends or of conviction *(Gesinnungsethik)*, wherein the beliefs and intention of the believer and not the consequences and success of her actions were taken as morally relevant. Since the world proved to be too complex, contingent, and uncontrollable, it was too dangerous to make judgments of the believer's conduct and prospects for salvation dependent upon such an environment. When Weber himself explores the options for overcoming the barrenness of significance in a secularized and disenchanted world, he

does think in terms of how to satisfy inward, individual exigencies, but rejects the ethic of conviction as incompatible with such an undertaking.

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I have tried to show why, by the internal dynamic of the quest for meaning, and by its gradual rationalization, salvation religions evolved which tended to have the three characteristics just discussed. But how does this cultivation of the desire for meaning take place? And what are the sources from which new world-views emerge? This is the point where Weber's charismatic leader, or prophet, comes into play. For the prophet "both the life of man and the world, both social and cosmic events, have a certain systematic and coherent meaning, to which man's conduct must be oriented if it is to bring salvation, and after which it must be patterned in an integrally meaningful manner."[21] The prophet "unlocks" the meaning of the world and opens it to the follower. He molds in some particular fashion the raw and *already-there* human desire to make sense of life, but always does so by attempting to establish a comprehensive and consistent outlook on life. However, the prophet pursues this undertaking not through reason, knowledge or priestly teaching -- but through the "charisma of illumination."[22]

Indeed, the prophet, (and most directly the ethical one [*Sendungs Prophetie*])[23] addresses himself to the deepest set of questions human beings ask about the world and their position in it: why was I born, why has my life ended up this way, and what will happen to me after I die? His ability (or perhaps presumption) to answer these and other questions is the reason for his allure and power: prophecies which provide spiritual

nourishment may have far-reaching consequences for individual conduct and hence for human history as a whole. Rational bureaucracy may change human conduct "from the outside" by imposing certain rules and employing disciplinary methods. Charisma, in contrast, "manifests its revolutionary power from within, from the central *metanoia* (change) of the follower's attitude." It has the potential to be such a disruptive and unpredictable force because "instead of reverence for customs that are ancient and hence sacred, it enforces the inner subjection to the unprecedented and absolutely unique and therefore Divine . . . charisma is indeed the specifically creative revolutionary force of history."[24] Charisma, by speaking directly to the human demand for a world of ethical significance, breaks through the ossification of both traditionalism and bureaucratic-rationalism.

The history of humanity which thus ensued is seen by Weber as tragic. The search for meaning "tended to progress, step by step, towards an ever-increasing de-valuation of the world."[25] This is true of both other-worldly mysticism and this-worldly asceticism: the first rejects any involvement with the goods of this world as an interruption of the acosmic union; the second is engaged with the world, but for the sake of God and salvation, not because it values earthly lives in themselves. The outcome of both paths is therefore the ultimate disenchantment of the world and the rejection of any religious significance that may be embedded in it. This disenchantment of religion set the stage for further disenchantment by the modern natural sciences. Hence the dynamic, religious quest for meaning spawned the crisis of meaninglessness in modernity: it undermined itself, and discarded the traditional sources of meaning it helped to bring about.[26]

Underlying Weber's sociology of religion, then, are certain claims about human beings, particularly that a human being is a desiring *homo-hermeneut*. The crisis of modern culture is multi-faceted, but is primarily the result of the impoverishment of the sources of meaning, which came about with the disenchantment and rationalization of the world. Thus, instead of generating meaning by interpreting the cosmos, our age "must rather be in a position to create this meaning itself."[27] Weber remained ambiguous in his political sociology as to whether charismatic political leadership in plebiscitarian democracy may provide a new source of collective meaning;[28] he is more explicit, however, in suggesting that the solution to the crisis of the modern self should be sought for "each person by herself." Weber's concept of personality is designed to answer this challenge.

II.   *Weber's Concept of "Personality"*

The disenchantment of the world, and the nihilistic state of mind which accompanies it, is a unique predicament of modernity, but it is clearly not the only problem faced by the modern self. The loss of horizons of significance coincided, in Weber's view, with other related threats: the growing division of labor and the demand for strict specialization, the dominance of instrumental rationality, the restriction of individual freedom, the impersonalization of human relations, and the conflict among value-spheres. These and other trials of the individual within modern culture seemed especially threatening in the German society of Weber's time, a society which subsequently went through a failed attempt to adapt itself to modernity. His concept of "personality," which he first develops

in *The Protestant Ethic* and holds to throughout the rest of his life, is designed to address this plight of the modern self.[29] During the same period, however, Weber worked on his methodological essays, and his concept of personality bears the traces of these studies as well.

In one of these essays Weber defines the personality as "a concept which entails a constant and intrinsic relation to certain ultimate 'values' or 'meanings' of life, 'values' and 'meanings' which are forged into purposes and thereby translate into rational-teleological action."[30] The personality lives in light of consciously chosen, ultimate values; it creates a "center" of normative evaluations from which other beliefs and actions proceed. Such a self, of course, is only an option, but for Weber it is by virtue of these qualities that human beings are separated from nature and acquire distinctiveness and respect. "Certainly," he writes, "the dignity of the 'personality' lies in the fact that for it there exist values about which it organizes its life . . . ."[31] Weber is therefore founding his concept of the self upon the same anthropological presupposition that guides his sociology of religion, i.e., the individual as *homo-hermeneut*.

Weber's model of the self is based on the notion of a *coherent and intelligible narrative*. Life should not be an ensemble of contradictory beliefs and unconnected decisions and actions; rather, each life in its totality should unfold from the "inner core" of the individual. This core will render meaning onto particular positions and actions taken in the course of life, since each incident will be part of a greater, continuous story. The personality may maintain its integrity throughout its life only by relentlessly struggling against both external and internal obstacles, by standing for the values it espouses "against

the difficulties which life presents."[32] These difficulties, which Weber does not specify, are nevertheless familiar to all: temptations to compromise one's values, periods of self-doubt, insurmountable resistance by others and by objective external conditions, transient passions and desires that may sway a person from a chosen course. Lapses, to be sure, are as inevitable here as in religious worship. But what was true for the Puritan seems also to hold for the personality. For the former, it was the "constant quality of the personality"—and not its possible occasional transgressions—that revealed its true nature and ethical worth.[33] Similarly, what counts for the personality is whether, in the last account, a common thread of some ultimate values lay behind the story it forged out of its life.

In the creation of this narrative, the personality must rely on its will, both in choosing values and in acting consistently upon them. In this respect, Weber's notion of the self has Kantian foundations. For Kant, a "person" is someone who freely and autonomously chooses to follow the categorical imperative dictated by practical reason. Such a self must resist the empirical and natural aspect of humans; otherwise, it may follow contingent desires, or pursue its self-interest and happiness. Weber's concept of personality, at least in his early methodological works, seems also to be dichotomized between consciously chosen beliefs in the light of which the self governs itself, and jumbled decisions and actions not based on any enduring, rationally determined, normative foundation. But Weber departs from Kant in significant ways. The values held to by the personality are not simply moral and formal, but, on the contrary, take substantive stands with respect to the most meaningful and essential questions of life. The field of the normatively and morally relevant is extended to encompass a person's entire existence. Moreover, while

embracing a set of ultimate values, the self does not follow any universal laws, but has to choose among numerous positions. Consequently, the duties and obligations of the self are not to Humanity (as Kant would have it), but to what it has committed itself to be and do.

If Weber rejects the universality of the self on the one hand, he opposes the notion of the uniquely *given essence* of the self or its indissoluble bond with predetermined collective meta-narratives on the other. In Weber's time such neo-Romantic conceptions of the self were held by members of the German Historical School. According to Weber, Knies (who was his former teacher and a member of this school) maintained that "the essence of 'personality' is above all to be an 'entity' . . . [which Knies] immediately transformed into the idea of a naturalistically and organically conceived '*homogeneity*.'"[34] Knies follows the Herderian tradition, suggesting that the self (and the *Volk*) unfolds like an organism from a predestined substance. Weber rejects this idea on the grounds that the self neither has a given essence and truth nor is compelled from within to move in a certain direction. Weber's model is one of self-constitution and self-molding, rather than of the exploration of inner depths and organic growth.

But Weber seems to have taken something from the *Volkish* tradition after all. Knies believed that the essence of the personality determines its ethical, economic, religious, political, and social conduct. Weber, as I have pointed out, replaced the given essence with a freely chosen core-- but one which nevertheless constantly strives for a cohesiveness reflected in all departments of life. He clearly articulates this notion in *Confucianism and Taoism* (1915).

> Genuine prophecy created from within a way of life systematically oriented towards a single scale of values, and in the light of such an orientation the world is regarded as raw material to be shaped in ethical terms according to the given norm Confucianism was the reverse of this, being adaptation to things outside, i.e., to the various conditions of the land of the living. The most well-adapted man, however, if he has rationalized his way of life only as far as is necessary, for such adaptation is not a systematic, homogeneous entity, but a combination of useful individual qualities . . . [such conduct] was unable to produce that *striving toward unity from within* which we connect with the concept of personality. Life remained a series of events, not a whole seen methodically in light of transcendent purpose [my emphasis].[35]

The Chinese self, according to Weber, lacked a center. The individual remained fragmented, following given conceptions of what is considered by the social conventions to be the proper behavior in each case.[36] His goal was aesthetic: to make himself into a refined person, a work of art of beautiful deeds and articulations. His challenge was to carry himself properly in public and to fulfil the customary obligations towards others, especially parents and superiors. To achieve this, educated literati studied the canon, practiced the accepted manners, and suppressed personal desires. The Chinese, in other words, lost himself in the social world, forgoing any sense of distinct, integrated identity; he negated his selfhood, habituating his person to the traditionalist codes of the surrounding culture. To this type of individual the Western personality seemed barbaric and undisciplined: the Westerner allowed himself to "reveal his inner self in his conduct, gestures and expressions."[37] Furthermore, the personality directed itself to a narrow and specialized end (e.g., a vocation), something the well-cultivated, multifaceted Chinese found repugnant. From Weber's depiction of the religions of the East, then, there emerges a common thread among them: as the Buddhist mystic, in his quest for salvation, emptied himself and strove to become "nothing" (Nirvana), the Confucian, while declining any

notion of salvation, lost himself in the social world, foregoing any sense of a distinct and integrated personality.

Underlying Weber's conceptualization of the self, is a repeated dichotomy: on the one hand, there is the self without a center, such as the follower of the Eastern religions (especially Confucianism and Buddhism) the bureaucratic-rational official, or the traditionalist. On the other hand, there is a self that is seeking agonistically a clearly demarcated and unified inner-core, the Western personality. This core is constructed, as Hennis puts it, "by the fact that such a person is capable of a complete and inwardly motivated personal 'dedication' . . . to a cause (*sache*) that transcends individuality."[38] One establishes an enduring sense of distinct selfhood by serving ends that go beyond oneself and hence have less of a fragile and transitory nature. The cause may differ—it may be a religious command, a nation, humanity, or what is vital for the modern self, a specific vocation—but it must in all cases be embraced whole-heartedly, passionately, by the individual. Because of this *constituted* individuality and distinctiveness, the Occidental self was able to break through the uniformity of tradition and to pursue "what is peculiar precisely and only to this individual, in opposition to all others." Weber, it seems, believes that only the social openness for the assertion of individuality provides the inner motivation to "drag oneself by the forelock from the morass and make oneself into a 'personality' . . . ."[39]

The dedicated service of a cause requires a vigorous, energetic, and methodical-rational type of conduct. The Western ideal is of an engaged self, a "busily active 'personality' relating his activity to a center, be it other-worldly and religious or be it this-worldly."[40]

In order to facilitate such conduct, it is necessary that the "totality" of a person's endeavors gain ethical significance. As we saw above, this was precisely the goal of ethical prophets (such as Jesus and Calvin) who wished to secure in the believer a constant feeling of salvation. To that end, the *Geinnungsethik* was gradually introduced, as well as an ascetic-active way of life. The Buddhist mystic fled from the world, and thus had no use for placing ethical value in the mundane; the Puritan remained in it, and could therefore rescue her life from the fear of damnation only by ethically "charging" her every-day activities, by regarding the world "as a raw material to be shaped in ethical terms." This also meant that the individual was formed into a personality only in a *social context*, in which beliefs revealed themselves through one's relations to others: family members, neighbors, friends, and the community as a whole.

The concept of the personality, Weber realized, may have value in contemporary society only if it can be secularized, especially as far as the value and meaning of work is concerned. In *The Protestant Ethic*, Weber argues that work, which lacked any religious significance in Catholicism, became for the Puritan a "calling" or "vocation" *(Beruf)*. The Puritan saw in work the arena in which he must manifest his religious virtue, since "divine providence has prepared for everyone without distinction a particular *calling*, which he must recognize and in which he must work . . . [since it is] a commandment by God to the individual to work to His glory."[41] The Puritan, however, was not exclusively concerned with God's glory; he yearned also for the immediate psychological reassurance of eternal salvation. Methodical work in a calling, especially if it brought proof of virtue through material success, answered this need in a permanent present.

But for "us," things are different. "The Puritan wanted to be a man with a calling: we are compelled to be." Yet "the idea of 'duty in one's calling' haunts our present life like the ghost of our former religious beliefs."[42] In modern capitalist and bureaucratic societies, narrow specialization and the renunciation of any hope of overcoming this confinement is the fate of all. Nevertheless, if the "totality" of life is still to have ethical meaning, it must manifest itself in modern individuals' working lives, not only because they are "forced" to spend their lives in occupational activities, but also because this is the main sphere within which the modern self may establish personal identity and gain a sense of self-worth. In a secularized world, however, turning an occupation into a vocation with ethical import requires at least two conditions. First, the *this-worldly* ultimate values of a person must be related to her vocation, which means that it is the intrinsic qualities of the vocation that matter to the secularized self, and not the symbolic role of work as a tool for salvation. Second, the external conditions of a vocation must allow for enough "free space" (not merely in the private sphere!) for the individual to practice and act upon her beliefs. The predicament of the modern, disciplined self fails to fulfil both of these conditions.

III.   *The Disciplined Self and the Rights-Protected Space*

Weber's delineation of discipline is one of his most important insights into the fate of the modern self. Except for a short chapter dedicated to this subject,[43] Weber's reflections are scattered throughout his studies; to facilitate my discussion, these need to be grouped

together and reconstructed. In order to make manifest the implications of his critique for contemporary social and political thought, I will juxtapose (in a rather schematic fashion) the disciplined self not only with Weber's concept of "personality," but also with its prototype--that is, with the liberal self.

Liberalism, especially in its rights-based variant, introduced the distinction between the public and private spheres, the latter being a space insulated by a cluster of rights in which the individual can foster and practice her notion of the good life without social and state interference. According to Isaiah Berlin's well-known interpretation, the shared and fundamental conviction among the otherwise diverse liberal views that evolved since Occam and Erasmus, and later developed by theorists such as Smith, Mill, Constant, and Paine lies in their demand for a "minimum area of personal freedom." Individual rights are designed to protect a *range of possibilities* open to the self, and thus the crucial question is, "What am I free to do or be?" This type of freedom "from," or "negative" liberty, is the mark of "high" civilizations and originates from "the desire not to be impinged upon, to be left to oneself."[44] In Berlin's view, this desire as well as the wish to develop one's individuality are likely to appear only with a certain level of socio-economic and cultural development. Modernity is not only compatible with greater personal freedom and diversity, therefore, but in fact enhances the demand and provides the necessary external conditions for accomplishing them.

We can see liberalism, at least in its Berlinian interpretation, as demanding that each person will be conceived of as possessing around her a three-dimensional space: physical, emotional and mental. She is free to the extent that her movements and the uses of her

body are not restricted; her attachments (or lack of) to others are not imposed upon her or shaped by external institutions in any way; and her thoughts, deliberations, and expressions of views are not interfered with. The fact that none of this is characteristic of contemporary civil society and its occupational structure is taken by liberalism as essentially un-problematic: it tacitly assumes a dualistic self that is allowed to change identities when moving between the private and public spheres. For Weber, to whom the personality is "a whole," such distinctions are an evasion: the self shaped in the rationalized life-orders is identical to the one that moves within the "insulated" private sphere. Weber's portrayal of the disciplined self therefore offers us an opportunity to examine critically and contextualize some liberal assumptions about the self and its present circumstances. As we shall see, Weber's critique of modern society implies that in each of the three-dimensional liberal spaces the self is forged and molded by "the outside." This does not mean that he sees individual rights and the political structure which guards them as insignificant, but only that he thinks they have limited usefulness as far as the self-formation of identity is concerned.

The disciplined self (that is, the strictly habituated human being, e.g., the soldier, the official, the worker) is the mirror image of the personality. Externally, there are some resemblances. Both work methodically on a given task, display control over their emotions, and act in a rational-instrumental manner. This is not surprising, since self-discipline as a personal trait first emerged from monasteries into mundane life with the Protestants. As a strategy of mass control, discipline was perfected in armies governed by Calvinist and Puritan principles and beliefs, such as those of Maurice of the House of Orange and Cromwell. Progressively, however, disciplinary conduct remained while

internal and personal motivations underlying this type of deportment faded.

The difference between the disciplined self and the personality is thus essentially an *internal* one, and it can perhaps be best captured by the interpretive methodology of *Verstehende* sociology. Precisely because from an external-descriptive point of view no fundamental change can be discerned, this science is called for by our time: it inquires into the relation between observed conduct and the motivations behind it, and illuminates the continuous impoverishment in the inner lives of modern selves. Weber's study of "social action," especially in life-orders such as capitalist markets and bureaucracies, reveals a flat and hollow human environment where individuals must adapt themselves to the impersonal demands of their given functions. These functions are determined by the goals of the mass-organization, not by the needs of those embedded within the institution or by the interests of particular persons at its head. For these reasons, as well as because of their sheer magnitude, we can say that modern mass-organizations are highly *anonymous* in nature. Thus, while the Puritan's self-discipline was inspired by God, contemporary discipline is essentially without a "subject," and its maxims are internalized as such. This is decisive for any understanding of the special character of modern discipline. However, before we examine the typical characteristics of this human behavior, its preconditions should be enumerated.

The human deportment that follows disciplinary rules emerged and became wide-spread throughout the modern institutional matrix because of two important processes. First, "the separation of the warrior from the means of warfare and the concentration of the means of warfare in the hands of the warlord have everywhere been one of the typical bases of

mass discipline," explains Weber. "And this has been the case whether the process of separation and concentration was executed in the form of *oikos*, capitalist enterprise or the bureaucratic organization."[45] This concentration of means (of warfare, production, and office) made the individual materially dependent upon the owner. Moreover, it legitimized obedience to imposed regulations of conduct according to the shifting external and functional necessities. (Weber thus agrees with Marx that this process of concentration of means is one of the sources for the enslavement, alienation, and dehumanization of human beings, but sees the sphere of production as comprising just one part of a larger trend.)

Second, the segregation of work-place and home was decisive for the advent of discipline, since sexual and erotic needs no longer interfered with the execution of tasks, and the energies of the individual were at the complete disposal of the organization. Furthermore, this separation allowed for a change in relations of domination, as obedience now followed formal and hierarchical lines instead of patriarchal or feudal ones. The operation was freed from personal commitments and could abide, without disruption, by the standards of efficiency and calculability. Under these conditions disciplinary conduct evolved, which Weber defines in this way.

> The content of discipline is nothing but the consistently rationalized, methodically trained and exact execution of the received order, in which all personal criticism is unconditionally suspended and the actor is unswervingly and exclusively set for carrying out the command. In addition, this conduct under orders is uniform.[46]

The disciplined self, in contrast to the personality, obeys commands that have exterior

sources; it is governed by the "outside" rather than by its self-created center. The official is reduced to being "only a single cog in an ever-moving mechanism which prescribes to him an essentially fixed route of march."[47] As such a "cog," he is discouraged from exercising any personal judgment or reflection, especially in matters of substantive values. If he is not blindly following given rules, his discernment is restricted to cases requiring calculative, instrumental rationality. The type of knowledge accumulated by the disciplined self, then, is concerned with means-ends and costs-effects estimations, as well as with the rules of the system and its modes of operation.

The vision that guides discipline as a technique of control is twofold. First, discipline is devised to achieve the "optimal economy of forces,"[48] and the complete utilization of individuals. The second, and related, goal is to intentionally fashion human beings in a similar manner; to achieve "rationally uniform" conduct which is utterly predictable and therefore efficient. This permits the "mechanism" to continue operating even if the individuals within it are replaced. Now we can see why the induced uniformity and the utilization of human powers infiltrate each of the liberal rights-protected spaces.

This is manifested, to begin with, in the contrived objectification of the body. The purpose of military drills and training is to achieve homogeneous movements governed by a rationally determined strategy. What made Cromwell's army unique was not its weapons, but "that after the attack they [his soldiers] remained in close formation or immediately re-aligned themselves." Indeed, "the kind of weapon has been the result and not the cause of discipline."[49] In the factory, however, the type of inner motivations that guided the Puritan soldiers were no longer necessary, since the human body was now

called upon to adapt itself to predetermined, objective and external requirements. In the plant, "the psycho-physical apparatus of man is completely adjusted to the demands of the outer world, the tools, the machines--in short to an individual function." The body is no longer seen as a whole, but as composed of numerous parts, each of which can be manipulated separately; it thus acquires a "new rhythm through a methodical specialization of separately functioning muscles."[50]

The emotional lives of human beings are not exempt from discipline either, contends Weber. The bureaucratic organization operates under the principle of "*sina ira ac studio*. It develops the more perfectly the more the bureaucracy is 'de-humanized,' the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation."[51] The Puritan controlled his emotions and his irrational behavior for the sake of salvation; the official is forced to do so by the very rationale of the organization. She is trained to be a contained, unexpressive, and non-spontaneous self, and hence capable of being wholly anticipated. This bureaucratic ethic of affective suppression is the complete reversal of the feudal one; the feudalist social structure was grounded in feelings of "purely personal loyalty of the members of the administrative staff."[52] Emotions between lord and vassal were the very foundation of the bond that held the medieval bureaucracy together. For the modern official, however, personal commitments and feelings are taken as irrelevant and disruptive; if any sense of loyalty exists, it is to an impersonal mass-organization. Similarly, the modern military rejects "individual hero-ecstasy or piety" and "spirited enthusiasm of devotion to a leader as a person," and commands instead cool "matter of factness" and a *rational* allegiance of an "objective character."[53] Discipline therefore

enhances the powerful disposition of the capitalist market to introduce emotion-free human intercourse.

But it is the produced uniformity and standardized employment of humans' mental and intellectual capacities that most alarmed Weber. The bureaucracy is an "animated machine [*lebende Maschine*]," the product of an "reified intelligence [*geronnener Geist*]."[54] These externalized and institutionalized human powers of instrumental and formal rationality are blind to any personal-distinctive characteristics based on ultimate values, personal experiences and memory, cultural background, and so forth. As noted, modern mass-organizations are guided by the values of predictability, calculability, and efficiency, and these can be followed--ideally--in the same manner by any person. Discipline has a levelling effect, since it eliminates difference and inculcates procedural-universal modes of thought. Weber deemed this habituation of the mind as the most elusive and dangerous form of discipline, arguing that in modernity it is on the rise because the whole organization of society depends upon it. Because Weber combines this "sublimated" type of discipline with those of the body and affective life, he can speak of the modern self by repeatedly using mechanical metaphors.

It is a mistake, however, to see this uniform discipline simply as "imposed." A closer look at the inner motivations and meanings of the soldier, the worker, and especially the official does not necessarily reveal a coerced individual.

> An official who receives a directive which he considers wrong can and is supposed to object to it. If his superior insists on its execution, it is his duty and even his honor to carry it out as if it corresponded to his

innermost conviction, and to demonstrate in this fashion that his sense of
duty stands above his personal preference . . . This is the ethos of
office.[55]

In contrast to the politician, the official finds his sense of self-worth precisely in the

renunciation of his person. His sense of identity is based upon his ability to internalize

and identify with goals that have an impersonal and anonymous nature for him, and on

his willingness to turn himself into a "tool" of the organization rather than of his own

ultimate beliefs. Weber's account of the official is one of the first depictions of a self that

internalizes and acts upon "masterless" maxims and imperatives, and in this respect it

resembles Freud's analysis of morality and the agency of the super-ego, as well as

Foucault's discussion of Bentham's Panopticon.

The disciplined self, as I have noted, serves in Weber's thought as the double of the

personality; discipline eliminates the possibility of conducting oneself in light of a freely

chosen normative core, and it even curtails the cultivation of those human potentials that

could make such a project possible. Only with Weber's notion of the personality in mind

can we understand his conceptualization of discipline and why he saw it as a

"dehumanizing" phenomena. But if the personality can be seen as only one variant within

the broad spectrum of liberal notions of the self, its fate in the modern social matrix may

be seen as a generic case that illustrates the failure of liberal theory (especially of its

rights-based variant) to take discipline into consideration. Perhaps most critical in this

respect is the assumption of most liberal theorists, at least since Kant and Mill, that each

person is capable of choosing by herself some notion of the good (or in Weber's

formulation, a set of ultimate values). In order to espouse this individual vision of the good life, the liberal self must have attributes such as experience in deliberation over matters of values, courage, a sense of independence, and most important perhaps, an inner motivation to embark upon this liberal project. Yet it is an open question whether the self can actually be characterized by these attributes, and this question should be examined within *specific historical and cultural contexts*. As we have seen above, the official--the predominant disciplined character in contemporary society--is trained to lack all of these qualities, and liberal theorists generally fail to explore the implications of this training for their view of the self as a free agency capable of normative choices.

Liberalism, however, not only neglects to explore the ways in which the self is being disciplined and constituted in its daily activities, but also fails to observe how the domains in which personal visions of the good may have impact are continuously shrinking. The increasing density of bureaucratic regulations, the demand for specialization, and the progressively impersonal human relations--these and other such factors make the human environment ethically and normatively neutral and immune to any notion of the good. Liberalism's unwillingness to contextualize the potentials and motivations of the self is complemented by its reluctance to inquire into what can be called the range of the "space of the good," the extent of those life-domains in which the individual's conception of the good is relevant. (The "personality," of course, wishes that this space will include its entire existence.)

These two shortcomings of liberal theory lead us to the following conclusion. Liberal theorists view our age as one of increasingly pluralistic and unique identities, partly due

to the variety of moral alternatives that exist in general and in concepts of the good life in particular. While to a certain extent this view is accurate, it may also be misleading. Weber's argument shows the crucial aspects in which the socio-economic orders of modernity operate in the reverse direction, enlarging the domains of uniformity in each self's identity--despite the ever-increasing role of individual rights in contemporary political discourse and practice. It is therefore simplistic and pointless to ask whether it is pluralism and difference that are on the rise in modern societies, or rather homogeneity and sameness; the significant question is their relative weight within the constitution of identities.

IV.   *The Fragility of Meaning*

Can the modern self still find a sense of purpose and value in a world governed by instrumental rationality and the discipline of mass-organizations? Weber's answer is complex. On the one hand he warns against the anti-rational and aesthetic sources of meaning that are increasingly embraced by modern selves in response to their rationalized environment; on the other, he avers that certain vocations may, to a certain extent at least, overcome the contemporary forces of uniformity and the segmentation of horizons, and may also help to secure the collective source of import--culture. This source gains unprecedented importance, since with the disenchantment of the world the self is faced with a new challenge: it must construct this-worldly sources of meaning. According to Weber, this undertaking begins only after we have recognized the unique structural

demands made upon the modern self, and must involve a conscious, deliberate, and resolute choice among value-spheres. The religious believer was relatively exempt from such choice, but now the individual has to contend with the increasing clash among the various life-domains within which meaning may be sought.

> For the rationalization and the conscious sublimation of man's relations to the various spheres of values, external and internal, as well as religious and secular have . . . pressed towards making conscious the *internal and lawful autonomy* of the individual spheres; thereby letting them drift into those tensions which remain hidden to the originally naive relation with the external world.[56]

This well-known sentence from the opening pages of the "*Zwischebetrachtung*" is followed by a discussion of five value-spheres (the economic, political, aesthetic, erotic, and intellectual-cultural), each of which is examined from the point of view of its incompatibility with the value-sphere of religion (and especially the ethic of brotherly love).[57] The conflict among the value-spheres is inescapable because, as Brubaker says, they are "not created by individuals: they exist independently of and prior to the individuals who participate in them. Value-spheres have an objective existence, based on the objective requirements of particular 'forms of life.'"[58] As such, they provide a pre-existent context within which meaning may be generated. As long as Christianity served as an over-arching *Weltanschauung*, it provided ways, however tenuous, of reconciling the claims of these different value-spheres. (Like any other religion of salvation, Christianity presupposes that the world can be harmonized into a meaningful totality.) This changed with the process of secularization on the one hand, and the cultivation and increasingly autonomous weight of each sphere on the other, since now even the *hope* for harmonizing the different life-domains had to be relinquished. In order to overcome the

likely *internalization* of this extrinsic predicament of conflict, which threatens to leave the self divided and full of inner-strife, one must make a decisive choice among the value-spheres.

This recognition by the self that it should espouse a certain value-sphere (and the related choice of a specialized vocation) at the expense of others, calls for an heroic renunciation: not all the possible human goods of this world are open to us, and in order to achieve some we must deliberately and consciously forgo others. Accordingly, one may become a personality and establish a unified identity only by accepting a human condition that is the antipode to the *eudaimonia* of the Aristotelian self. The personality realizes that it cannot pursue within one life-span such diverse goods as contemplation and pursuit of culture, active citizenship and political engagement, cultivation of moral virtues, deepening of intimacy and love, and economic well-being. Only by devotion to a particular sphere of activity, and by accepting that sphere's binding norms and practices, may the individual forge a life of enduring significance, if not of true happiness.

Weber rejects other-worldly salvation as a mere chimera, yet he recognizes the exigency behind it and when bibbing us to make a choice among value-spheres he searches for redemption that is this-worldly. Value-spheres (except the economic-instrumental) offer routes to earthly salvation and opportunities for the defeat of meaninglessness, though not every route holds the same prospect for such salvation or serves equally well as grounds for turning oneself into a personality. Despite these differences they hold something in common that distinguishes them from any concept of salvation within theodicy: because in all spheres the source of meaning is this-worldly, entangled with human affairs and

endeavors, it is always uncertain and contingent. Invariably, the trapped self's existence is accompanied by a heightened awareness that the meaning of its life is, to one degree or another, fragile.[59]

The rationalization of religions of salvation, we saw above, was propelled by an attempt to escape exactly this kind of contingency and fragility. By making the ethical conduct of the individual the foundation of salvation, and by introducing a particular type of ethic (*Gesinnungscthik*) the individual may gain a permanent and secure feeling of salvation. Under the imperative of brotherly love, which most salvation religions hold to, it is the intentions of the believer and not her actions or their consequences that are considered religiously relevant. Since the allure of this highly demanding ethic is in the inner assurance of the other-worldly salvation it grants, however, secularized versions of it, such as Kant's, fail to provide sufficient motivation to follow them. While from his Nietzschean philosophical position Weber must accept the *Gesinnungsethik* as a valid possibility, his empirical assessment of human life as highly conflictual[60] implies that this ethic is inadequate for anyone who wishes to live *in* the world and in accordance with "the demands of the day."[61] For while this ethic can no longer bring other-worldly salvation, it puts in jeopardy the worldly human goods still accessible to the individual. (In this respect, Weber follows a Western critique of Christianity that goes back to Machiavelli's *Discourses*.)

1.   *Eroticism and Art*

One of these worldly goods is the realm of erotic relations. These evolve within human

civilizations once there is a "gradual turning away from the naive naturalism of sex."

Since the Medieval period, sexual relations in the Occident have gradually transcended

their reproductive and physical functions, and turned into an erotic bond "raised into the

sphere of conscious enjoyment (in the most sublime sense of the term)."[62] Eroticism

implies the sublimation of primal desires and emotions, and in general of the irrational

aspects of human beings. Because it involves the feeling of the ultimate uniqueness of

each person to each other and of their union, this bond is characterized by its exclusive

and non-communicable nature. Furthermore, this "direct fusion of souls to one another,"

this loss of the self in the singular other, is combined with an experience of elation:

through erotic love one feels that one adjoins the stream of life, the "kernel of the truly

living which is eternally inaccessible to any rational endeavor."[63]

In an age where instrumental and formal rationality reign, the erotic sphere becomes an

essential refuge. Erotic relations, in fact, offer "the specific sensation of an *inner-worldly*

salvation from rationalization" [my emphasis].[64] Perhaps more than any other source of

meaning, they bring a person to affirm the value of *life itself.* Erotic experience allows

one to recover what has been buried by the rationalization of modern culture: the world

is re-enchanted through the beloved other. The bewitchment of the world, however, also

makes this source of meaning highly unstable: ultimately, erotic relations are a passing

"euphoria" and their powerful intensity cannot last. (In fact, the sudden absence of love

may result in an unprecedented crisis of faith in the value of life.) Hence the usefulness of the erotic bond in endowing life with significance is rather limited. Weber, however, had other reasons to criticize a way of life that promotes eroticism as the primary route toward inner-worldly salvation: it leads to seclusion and to a life of inaction, which are rebuked by the ascetic. Such a life certainly lacks the type of values that may allow an individual to become a personality.[65]

Another possible source of meaning in Weber's view is art; like eroticism, it "takes over the function of this-worldly salvation."[66] In art a person can explore her true, authentic self, thus expressing her individuality in the face of a world that rejects it. Art may very well be the realm that most conflates the distance between the self and its vocation (and, more generally, the totality of its life). This explains its great appeal for the self and its emergence as the symbol for the assertion of subjectivity in contemporary culture. Art stopped being "conducive to the community formation,"[67] and no longer serves collective goals, but is identified with the individual's needs for inner growth and self-expression. This does not mean that the work of art cannot transcend the subjective. On the contrary, it communicates emotions, experiences, and a sense of beauty, which can be shared by others—but *qua* individuals, not as a group.

Weber recognized the appeal of art as a path for personal fulfillment, and thought it could be a basis for transforming oneself into a personality. Like the scientist, the artist may become a personality by serving "his work and only his work,"[68] not by turning life itself into a work of art. Moreover, art has advantages over other domains of meaning, since a "work of art which is a genuine 'fulfillment' is never surpassed; it will never be

antiqued."[69] The artist, more than the scientist or the politician, may attain immortality.

Nevertheless, the artist is not one of Weber's heros, and one can only speculate why.

First, it seems, the artist is not fully engaged with the existing life-orders of modernity,

but tends to remain outside of them. Moreover, the aesthetic creation (like the erotic

relation· is founded upon the irrational forces of life, which are transitory in nature, both

in form and in content. The artist is guided by the shifting grounds of the psyche and less

by consciously held values. One has little control over these grounds, and consequently

the life of the artist cannot be assembled into a meaningful totality; it remains, rather, a

composite of fragments governed by an unconscious master.

2.   *Redemptive Realism:*

                    The Place of Politics and Science in Modernity

There are two other sources of this-worldly meaning that Weber discusses, both of which

are essential to his thought and person: politics and science (culture). Both of these

activities combine self-fulfillment with engagement of social and collective concerns. The

political realm, to begin with, is exceptional for a few reasons, one of which is the

meaning it confers on death. According to Weber, Tolstoy proclaimed that "for civilized

man death has no meaning." The continuous and unprecedented advance of culture does

not allow for any cycle of life to be completed: "there is always a further step ahead of

one who stands in the march of progress. And no man who comes to die stands upon the

peak which lies in infinity."[70] While Weber was greatly disturbed by this view he did

not contest it—except in the case of the soldier. The latter may die on the battlefield; here and *only* here, "the individual can *believe* that he knows he is dying for something."[71] Politics is a distinct human activity because it involves the use of force or the possibility of resorting to violent means. But for Weber this violence is not merely a necessary evil: war, as the characteristic collective practice of the political sphere, is the sole *modern* path for redeeming death from insignificance and arbitrariness because behind it stands a community (nation or otherwise), a "cause" that endures in Time and transcends the fetters upon the individual's life-span. Weber says very little to support this perplexing argument, but one wonders whether it enhanced his strong nationalistic views (see below).

But what about politics as a source of meaning in life itself? What about politics as a vocation? The politician is Weber's hero in the rational-bureaucratic world, for she, more than anyone else, may overcome the rule-governed environment and shape the world in the light of her innermost beliefs. These convictions, not merely subjective or individualistic, are social-collective in nature and thus promise effects that will last through time. For example, one may embrace "national, humanitarian, social, ethical, cultural, worldly or religious" causes, all of which are a "matter of faith."[72] Nevertheless, conviction alone is not sufficient for the politician: together with "passion," she must also have "a feeling of responsibility and a sense of proportion."[73] Hence the "political personality" ought to foster a balance between strongly held beliefs on the one hand and a capacity for cool, distant observation of itself and the world on the other. It should be able to assess objective conditions as they are, and then rationally determine how to advance its causes—or be willing to admit that these causes are unrealistic. For Weber, the responsible politician is a cultural symbol, because she understands that ultimate

values can be upheld and acted upon only through negotiation with the rationalized world and its orders. In contrast, the politician who adheres to the ethic of conviction, and strives to realize her ends despite all costs and secondary implications, misconstrues the nature of politics and its special requirements in an age where the political sphere clashes with the religious-moral one.

The responsible politician walks fine lines: between ultimate values, without which politics is only a pointless game of power, and the need to make compromises or even abandon causes too costly to realize; between the imperative to use violence as a constitutive element of politics, and the excessive and unjustified use of such means. Perhaps the hardest challenge is to cope with the fact that the "final result of political action often, no, even regularly, stands in completely inadequate and often even paradoxical relation to its original meaning."[74] But it is chiefly in light of these sometimes unexpected and uncontrollable results that the politician is judged. In politics, therefore, the paradox of this-worldly salvation is the greatest. From one perspective, politics offers the person who engages in it the best prospects for redeeming her life from meaninglessness through the struggle to realize ultimate values on the largest possible scale; in politics, an individual may channel her entire existence into the service of supra-individual causes and influence the fate of society and its culture. Yet the inescapable dependency of political endeavors upon the contingencies of the world--a dependency that grows in direct proportion to the scale and importance of the political--makes it a highly fragile source of meaning, especially when the use of violence is involved. In politics salvation and damnation are intertwined, and one can never be certain which will prevail.

There is a natural affinity, according to Weber, between the politician and the cultural scientist. The former aspires to advance or at least preserve the power of the state mechanism and enhance her own standing. This political structure, however, is also necessary to preserve and solidify cultures, especially in a world where great powers are engaged in an imperialist struggle and where the inter-penetration of cultures threatens the distinct existence of each one. Weber contends that countries such as Germany are drawn to become a *Machtstaat* because they are legitimately interested in guarding their ways of life and traditions. Indeed, they have a "responsibility towards history"[75] to do so (in contrast to small countries such as Switzerland, which cannot become the representatives of Germanic or European culture). The scholars, and more generally the intellectuals, are less interested in *Machtpolitik*; but because they are ardent believers in what Weber calls the "specific cultural mission" of the nation, they are obviously inclined towards nationalism and the politics it entails.

"By intellectuals," Weber says, "we understand a group of men who by virtue of their peculiarity have special access to certain achievements considered to be 'cultural values' and who therefore usurp the leadership of a 'cultural community.'"[76] Any person who embraces this-worldly values and constructs a personal *Weltanschauung* does so within a cultural context, since culture is the immense container of meaning.[77] This is why "worldly man has recognized [the] possession of culture as the highest good."[78] Yet only the cultural scientist, the paradigmatic man of culture, has the tools, the skill, the external conditions and the internal dispositions to cultivate a coherent world-view that relentlessly aspires to be all-encompassing. From this latter vantage point he can grasp the social events, phenomena, processes--which remain obscure and senseless to all around him--

within an overall intellectual and normative framework.

The cultural scientist is not only the greatest beneficiary of culture, but also its devoted guardian. Through his studies he contributes to its evolution and vitality. His investigations are designed to answer questions and illuminate problems relevant to his time and society. As researchers, we select "only a *part* of concrete reality," a part which "is interesting and *significant* to us, because only it is related to the *cultural values* with which we approach reality."[79] Each scientific endeavor is anchored in a specific cultural context, but is also *individually* formed: it is the "values in the prism of his [the scientist's] mind" that give direction to the investigation and in light of which he determines what is significant. The scholar does not simply grasp the dilemmas and challenges of his age and place, but helps to redefine them. The "values to which the scientific genius relates the object of his inquiry may determine, i.e., decide, the 'conception' of a whole epoch, not only concerning what it regards as 'valuable' but also concerning what is significant or insignificant, 'important' or 'un-important' in the phenomena."[80] The science of culture, then, is such a cherished this-worldly activity because it allows an individual to construct the most comprehensive world-view, to pursue the latter through ascetic work of research, and perhaps even to shape the ideas and deeds of fellow members of society. For Weber, then, engaging in the study of culture is the exemplary way to turn oneself into a personality.

V.   *Conclusion*

Weber's answer to the crisis of the disenchantment and rationalization of life-orders is the immersion of the self in inter-subjective causes and complexes of meaning. Yet this solution ultimately fails because of the unique nature of modern culture: even scientific activity--which is relatively insulated from the contingencies of the world or from the instability of the irrational forces of life--may seem pointless because of the inability of the cultural scientist to develop a comprehensive *Weltanschauung*. (The politician faces the same problem).

> The perfectibility of the man of culture in principle progresses indefinitely, as do the cultural values. And the segment which the individual and passive recipient or the active co-builder can comprise in the course of a finite life becomes the more trifling the more differentiated and multiplied the cultural values and the goals of self-perfection become. Hence the harnessing of man into this external and internal cosmos of culture can offer the less likelihood that an individual would absorb either culture as a whole or what in any sense is 'essential' in culture . . . It thus becomes less and less likely that 'culture' and the striving for culture can have any inner-worldly meaning for the individual.[81]

The expansion, production, and progression of modern culture is so immense that no person is able to absorb and integrate it into his being. It becomes impossible to establish world-views that will not be composed of small and somewhat *arbitrary* segments of the cultural cosmos, or even just to make sense of the constant change. Certainly a strict specialist, as Weber thought any scientist ought to be, cannot achieve such a goal. Weber must have realized, but could not admit, that while scientific endeavor demands strict specialization, it depends nevertheless upon a much wider understanding of social

conditions: only on the basis of such an understanding can the scholar frame significant questions. Moreover, the scholar's "findings" are not likely to have lasting effect, given the dynamic phase of society and the proliferation of knowledge. From both ends, then-- from his diminishing ability to construct an inclusive world-view and therefore to ask questions that are significant for his culture, and from the questionable endurance and relevance of his research--the scientist has to combat the futility of his vocation. The cultural scientist, the prototype of the *Kulturmensch*, is a tragic hero, since "the advancement of cultural values appears the more meaningless the more it is made a holy task, a 'calling.'"[82]

The cultural scientist exemplifies the modern paradox of meaning: an investigator of the colonialization of social life by instrumental and economic maxims, he is nevertheless the prototype of the Occidental self because of his heightened quest for meaning. By studying how meaning flees from the world, both in the natural and social realms, Weber grappled with what he thought was the most crucial question of his age, while at the same time inquiring into the foundations and prospects of his own vocation. Like the politician, Weber's cultural scientist has a distinct ethos and responsibility: he must illuminate the predicament of his culture, point to its pressing dilemmas without endangering the objectivity of his own research. But with his diminishing ability to do so, the greatest danger commences--not simply the disenchantment of the world or the increasing rationalization of life-orders, but the disappearance of the consciousness that perceives this predicament as problematic.

Chapter Three:

Freud and the Castration of the Modern

Introduction

It is hard to think of two contemporaneous authors who differ as much as Weber and Freud. They seem, in fact, to pose a fundamental threat to one another, given their diametrically opposed views of human agency: while the Weberian "personality" is ruled by a desire for meaning, the psychoanalytic self is motivated, at least in its original constitution, by instincts that struggle for "discharge" and are oblivious to meaning. The personality, as we have seen, is characterized by its capacity to consciously choose ultimate values and by its relentless effort to act upon them in the world; Freud questions the autonomy of consciousness in relation to other psychic systems, the notion of free will, and the motivations for embracing particular ethical ideas. Weber, who had read some of Freud's works, was aware of the challenge psychoanalysis posed to his views; he recognized that the theory and the treatment it recommends could endanger the future of normative discourse. "Freudian therapy," he writes, "is simply a revival of *confession* with somewhat different techniques." Yet Freud neutralized from this religious practice any moral significance, suggesting instead a new way of self-understanding where ethical judgments are irrelevant. "Someone who is deceiving himself and wants to deceive himself," writes Weber, "and who has learned to shut from his memory those things in his life which he has to be ashamed of . . . is not going to be helped *ethically* by lying for months on end on Freud's couch and allowing 'infantile' or other shameful experiences which he has 'repressed' to be called to consciousness."[1]

Weber acknowledges that psychoanalytic therapy may help a person from what he calls a "nervous hygienic" point of view. But he is alarmed by the possible transformation of

value systems that the new discipline might inaugurate in society. If mental health were to become the prime value, would there still be a place for a "'heroic' ethic," one that demands "man's endless *striving*"?[2] If Freudians would follow Otto Gross, they would recommend the avoidance of any sacrificial deeds: renunciations of instinctual satisfaction could bring about repression and neurosis; events such as wars could result in trauma and permanent anxiety. Weber acknowledges that Freud himself is careful not to associate psychoanalysis with any particular normative *Weltanschauung*.[3] Yet psychoanalytic treatment steers the self *inward*, the latter's heroism consisting in its pursuit of self-knowledge and its struggle with unconscious psychic forces; the personality is oriented *outward*, is actively engaged in collective projects, and is measured by its willingness to stand behind its values. It is therefore surprising that despite these profound differences between them Weber and Freud share an earnest critical attitude towards modernity: both believe that the institutions of contemporary society impose escalating demands for normalization and eradication of individuality, and that their age witnesses the inescapable frustration of fundamental human needs—whether these are defined by hermeneutical or instinctual presuppositions.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the Freudian conception of entrapment, and thereby to juxtapose the "psychological iron cage" with the disciplining and meaning-free social universe of Weber. I distinguish between three interrelated layers of entrapment in psychoanalysis. Part I examines Freud's (final) theory of instincts, which is not only essential for his work as a whole, but is also the ground for his discontent with modernity. The historical vicissitudes of the instincts, both on the individual and collective levels, are responsible in Freud's view for producing the modern, neurotic self

that is inhibited in its sexuality and consumed by guilt. In addition, the theory of instincts allows Freud to suggest an (albeit underdeveloped) explanation for the forces that propel the process of civilization and maintain the social order--without resorting to either materialist-economic or idealist-moralist vocabularies. Through the theory of instincts, humans are presented as remorseful yet compulsive generators of the social world that confines them.

In Part II the two other layers of entrapment in psychoanalysis are reconstructed. For the Freudian self, I argue, modernity is a distinct epoch not because of the over-instinctual inhibition it commands, but because it involves an *unheimlich* (uncanny) mode of being, an eerie encounter with the morbid effects of the past that leads to a consciousness of homelessness within our home. This state of homelessness is, first, an individual affair that pertains to the ego's experience within the mind, to the antagonistic encounter of the self with a normalizing and belligerent agency: the super-ego. Freud does not see the mind as insulated from society, however. The *unheimlich* has a collective aspect, having bearing upon the self's attitude towards a civilization that is seen as inducing destructive internal workings though the super-ego--its psychic delegate. A distinction should therefore be made between psychic and social/cultural dimensions of homelessness, as they are two distinct processes of estrangement from what had been hitherto taken as grounds for belonging and sureness. The analysis below then proceeds to unveil Freud's fears of the social and political chaos that could result from the aspiration of modern selves to ameliorate their experience of homelessness. Side by side with Freud's condemnation of excessive instinctual repression is a contrasting discourse that reflects his sense of a looming collective and individual mental disintegration. This latter psychic

state can be characterized as "semi-psychotic," since it entails the potential expulsion and rejection of the super-ego. As is shown in Part IV, the response of psychoanalysis to this predicament is to direct the self and the community to take hold of the past and come to terms with it, rather than to radically transform their psychic apparatus and identity.

Part III examines how Freud's apprehensions of social and political chaos may have shaped the very core of his self psychology. This psychology presents as narcissistic illusion the notion that the social world could be freed from renunciation, frustration, and mutual dependency, stressing the inescapable limitations on human well-being and prospects for unanimity. Through the Oedipal complex, psychoanalysis depicts the transition of the self from a megalomanic creature living with fantasies about its power to control the environment and remain immune to its requirements, to a being with a more realistic, circumspect understanding of its less-than-commanding place in the world. This depiction of the mature self stands in contrast to convictions of post-Enlightenment Continental philosophy that were elucidated in the introductory chapter. In contrast to the aspirations to reconstruct one's surroundings or be insulated from their effects prevalent in that philosophy, psychoanalysis presents the Oedipal complex as a generic "narrative of subjection" which defines normality in terms of the principled, symbolic subordination of the ego to the super-ego, and of the self to its civilization. Put differently, while Freud condemns certain aspects of modern civilization, his self psychology categorizes an escape from its grip as a pathology. Hence, rather than simply perceiving the socio-political aspect of Freud's work as an extension of his self psychology and as a secondary, speculative addition to the main body of his work, this analysis asks how Freud's historical consciousness and socio-political inclinations formed his views of the psychic

apparatus of the self.

Before we continue, a clarification of purpose is called for. While this chapter contextualizes Freudian tenets, it is not concerned with the scientific validity of psychoanalysis, a topic predominant in the current literature ever since the publication of Adolf Grünbaum's *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis* (1984).[4] Instead, my critique of Freud rests upon the understanding that normative presuppositions are inescapable in the social and human sciences. "[A] given explanatory framework," writes Taylor, "secretes a notion of good, and a set of valuations, which cannot be done away with . . . unless we do away with the theory."[5] As a science and therapy whose subject is human beings, psychoanalysis contains such valuations about the desired psychic state of the self and the latter's proper relation to social reality. These normative considerations are reflected both in the selection of facts, of what is considered relevant and irrelevant, and in the construction and internal organization of the theory. This study seeks to uncover the normative presuppositions of psychoanalysis and to clarify how these were prejudiced by the intellectual-cultural context in general, and by the entrapment problematic in particular.

I. *Freud's Theory of Instincts: The First Layer of Entrapment*

Underlying Weber's discontent with modernity, as we saw in the previous chapter, is a view about the predispositions, needs, and potentials of the self. Similarly, Freud holds

a semi-biological conviction according to which instincts are central to human motivation, conduct, and being; and his observation that there is a "hostility" between humans and their civilization rests on the claim that "civilization is built upon a renunciation of instinct[s]."[6] In each person's development and in the course of civilization's advent as a whole, these "powerful" instincts undergo repression, diversion, and sublimation, and the self that emerges is increasingly alienated from its organic constitution.

The Freudian instinct has two important characteristics: irresistibility and high fluidity. Freud defines an "instinct" (*Trieb*) as "a concept on the frontier between the mental and the somatic, as within the organism and reaching the mind, as a measure of the demand made upon the mind for work in consequence of its connection with the body."[7] The instinct, which may originate in various bodily organs, is experienced by the mind as an "excitation" that requires some type of *activity* to alleviate the inner-tension it has established. The self cannot flee these excitations, as it can flee external sources of tension, threats, demands—of displeasure. "Towards the inside," writes Freud, "there can be no . . . shield."[8]

Yet if an instinct commands irresistible activity, the specific nature of this activity is undetermined. In *Three Essays on Sexuality* (1905), Freud distinguishes between the source, aim, and object of an instinct, showing that while the first may be relatively fixed, the last two are susceptible to complex vicissitudes. For example, while the original aim of an instinct may be a discharge of aggression on an external object (sadism), this object may be displaced by one's own body (masochism). The aim of an instinct may also undergo more radical alterations. Relief from internal stimulus can be obtained through

a sublimated expression such as work, or it may be denied discharge altogether, in which case repression would follow. Freud's theory of instincts went through some significant changes. He first distinguished between sexual and ego instincts, then suggested the existence of only one instinct, and finally introduced in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) a new pair, Eros and Death. This late theory serves as the main basis for his social critique.

Given his assertion that instincts are fluid, Freud conceptualizes Eros's economy of energy (libido) as a zero-sum game, the problem being its relative distribution. Eros is first oriented toward unspecified, immediate sexual discharge, but desire sets in motion a mechanism that is self-defeating. From the point of view of phylogenesis, this self-defeat begins with the onset of civilization. The brothers, speculates Freud in *Totem and Taboo (1912)*, murdered their father and entered into a semi-contractual association in order to achieve access to women and instinctual satisfaction. Once the germ of civilization was established, however, society gradually forced humans not only to subject their sexual life to progressively restrictive norms, but also to divert their libido to fulfil societal needs. The inhibition of sexuality opens the way for the sublimation of Eros into (a) work and cultural production, and (b) universal love or affection. Freud believes that this diffusion of libido renders love meaningless, and that while Eros can be diverted and sublimated, another part of it is inescapably repressed. Despite the flexible quality of Eros, then, history for Freud is a narrative of denied wishes and sacrifice, and therefore of concealed, traumatic memories: an ordeal of psychic illness that leads to what Brown calls "the universal neurosis of mankind."[9]

Against the Death instinct, which expresses itself through unpredictable aggressive acts of the individual toward the environment, society defends itself by a dialectical mechanism that directs this urge against its originator. The fate of the Death instinct resembles the fate of Eros: not only is it repressed by civilization and denied external satisfaction, but it is made to serve civilization's own interests in ensuring orderliness, submission, uniformity, responsibility, and so forth. As we shall see below, the outcome of the Oedipus complex (both collectively and individually) is the institution of the super-ego, a psychic agency characterized by its imposition of moral imperatives upon the ego and by its harsh internal policing of possible transgressions, whether in thought or action. This agency in fact not only checks aggression, but also monitors the expressions of Eros or sexuality. With the institution of the super-ego, society "introduces a garrison, as it were, into regions that are inclined to rebellion."[10] In the course of history this "garrison" becomes increasingly armed and watchful, so that "the price we pay for our advance in civilization is a loss of happiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt."[11]

The repression and forced rechannelling of Eros and Death are then the reasons for *das unbehagen in der kultur*. Freud sees this predicament as reversible, yet not accidental. It is not accidental since the generation of civilization throughout history is a human inner necessity. In "On Narcissism" (1914), Freud quotes Heine: "Illness was no doubt the final cause of the whole urge to create. By creating I would recover; by creating I became healthy."[12] Heine was perhaps probing into God's psychogenesis, yet Freud humanizes this observation: it is internal tension caused by the sexual instinct that compels humans to reach out beyond themselves; "in the last resort we must begin to love in order not to

fall ill."[13] If at this stage Freud still thinks about love and creation mainly in terms of sexual relations and procreation, with the introduction of Eros instead of the sexual instinct *per se*, the theme of begetting the social becomes more prominent. While originally humans are not engrossed in the erection of the social world, they are progressively forced to be so. The formation of the first social organization by the brothers established a new dialectic: normative prohibitions propel humans to discharge their Eros through sublimation and cultural production, yet this process generates new prohibitions, which call for an even greater discharge through sublimation. Because of the irresistible and fluid qualities of instincts, then, the construction and cultivation of civilization becomes an *internal compulsion*, a last resort for avoiding sickness and insanity after the purely sexual channels for expressing Eros have been blocked. But if through Eros Freud is able to suggest an answer to the European preoccupation with how civilization has been generated, Eros also provides an explanation for why the social order is preserved. Freud claims that the utilization of Eros to continuously extend human libidinal bounds cements the social matrix; the foundation of the purely anthropocentric order is therefore not moral or utilitarian—but emotional/sexual.

Yet the social order and civilization contain, according to Freud, powerful ingredients that subject them to unfathomable, unruly forces. "Besides the instinct to preserve living substance and to join it into ever larger units [Eros], there must exist another, contrary instinct [Death] seeking to dissolve those units and to bring them back to their primeval inorganic state."[14] Both instincts have the "compulsion to repeat," to return to their original states, and hence there is an ineradicable conflict between union and dissolution in human life. Now the assertion that destructiveness is a constitutive element of human

behavior and not the outcome of contingent social conditions is not new to Freud's milieu; in different ways, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche make similar claims. Freud's innovation, rather, is in the interplay of Death and Eros: he argues that the human odyssey within time is highly brittle, and joins the Romantic theme of death with post-Hegelian and post-Marxian uncertainty about the movement of history. "In consequence of [the] . . . primary mutual hostility of human beings," he writes, "civilized society is perpetually threatened with disintegration."[15]

Despite its centrality for psychoanalysis and for Freud's critique of modernity, the theory of instincts is rather speculative in nature; psychic instincts, after all, are not subject to empirical observation and verification. Freud admits this problem of his metapsychology. "The theory of instincts," he writes, "is so to say our mythology."[16] Like any other mythology, it is measured by the insights it provides about the human psyche and social behavior, not by its empirical status. Freud often seeks to support his mythology with selected excerpts from other sources, such as philosophy, poetry, and, of course, Greek mythology and plays. In order to reinforce the plausibility of his (final) theory of instincts, Freud cites at different occasions two very distant philosophers, Plato and Schopenhauer; this mixture of epochs gives the theory an apparently universal, timeless standing.[17] Looked at more closely, however, his conceptualization of instincts--and of their daunting lot--reveals its indebtedness to a rather particular historical imagination: in a manner that resembles Rousseau, Marx, Nietzsche, Weber, and other post-Enlightenment theorists, Freud attempts to uncover the process that propels Western civilization to increasingly dehumanize and devitalize its own creators.

Freud's theory of instincts allows him to introduce innovative concepts and mechanisms for explaining this dehumanizing process. He presents human beings as internally forced, regretful creators of the social. While recognizing the possibility of catastrophic reversal, Freud does not attribute the erection of the over-civilized state to any contingent, historical factor; in contrast to the prevalent belief of the nineteenth century, Freud argues that human discontent is intrinsic to life in a social order *as such*. From this perspective, he views modernity as differing from other epochs in the quantitative degree of repression--but not in any qualitative aspect. Hence he criticizes bourgeois society simply for its over-restrictive and hypocritical sexual mores, for ingraining normalized sexual practices that mushroom neuroses and intensify inner-aggression. Yet to stop here would be inaccurate, a misrepresentation of Freud's historical consciousness.

II.   *Modernity and the Unheimlich*

Entrapment by virtue of the instincts is the foundation for a more complex and distinct experience of entrapment. While Freud downplays qualitative differences of repression across both time and culture, one can discern in his writings a sense of an impending radical change in the collective attitude towards repression and its historical effects. Modernity is *sui generis* because it involves a new understanding of culture's morbid imprints within us, one that calls for an alarming confrontation with the project of civilization; psychoanalysis is both the offspring of this predicament and an attempt to respond to its challenges. This unprecedented moment of confrontation, which Freud did

not name, can perhaps best be characterized as one of both psychic and social homelessness within our home. While these two types of homelessness are interwoven, for explanatory purposes they will be discussed in order.

1.   *An Uncanny Psyche*

"Nothing [more] . . . is meant by our talk about uncanniness," writes Heidegger, than the "existential 'mode' of the '*not at home.*'"[18] While Freud does not make such an explicit statement, his discussion in "The Uncanny" ["*Das Unheimlich*" (1919)] leads to the same conclusion. Freud begins his discussion in "The Uncanny" by suggesting that the *unheimlich* "is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar."[19] This interpretation seems at first to be contradictory: how can something that we are well acquainted with be transformed into a cause for terror? In its common usage, the word uncanny is employed in situations where we feel uneasy and bewildered precisely because we have encountered something foreign, eerie, incomprehensible. But Freud avers that his twist of the prevalent understanding of the *unheimlich* has etymological justification in the German language.

Normally the word *heimlich* is associated with what is homelike and thus safe, expected, agreeable, and intimate. Home is not only an environment to which we are well accustomed, but also one that allows us to get reacquainted with ourselves, where inner and outer familiarity reinforce one another; it is therefore the ultimate metaphor of

belonging. Yet home, or hominess, may have completely different connotations. *"From the idea of 'homelike,' 'belonging to the house,' the further idea is developed of something withdrawn from the eyes of strangers, something concealed, secret (geheim)* . . . ."[20] The place that is homelike (*heimlich*) to me, that encloses my life, may seem impenetrable, mysterious, and inhospitable to others, and in this case *heimlich* approximates the common usage of *unheimlich*. Freud, however, seems to find the true meaning of *unheimlich* in that state when an assured feeling of belonging is displaced by and juxtaposed with a new sense of estrangement precisely from what we thought most our own, when what we have concealed and forgotten in the house suddenly comes to light and transforms our experience within it. The home then becomes an incomprehensible and hostile space, not for strangers but *for its own inhabitants.*

For psychoanalysis the mind is our home (or house); at least that is how things had been until this theory arrived. After Copernicus, proclaims Freud, humans had to recognize that they inhabit only a peripheral fragment of a vast universe. "The second blow" was Darwin's discovery that humans are descended from primates. "But human megalomania will have suffered its third and most wounding blow," writes Freud, "from the psychological research of the present time which seeks to prove to the ego that it is not even the master of its own house. . . ." (*"es nicht einmal Herr ist im eigenen Hause"*).[21] This experience and consciousness of helplessness is the upshot of the ego's encounter with two classes of otherness within the mind: first, a semi-biological otherness that embodies the "organic past" and escapes representation in language and schematization within time (id); second, an acquired otherness, the delegate of civilization and tradition within the mind (super-ego). Against the first, biologically inherited otherness, the ego

is relatively helpless and can at best improve its control over this psychic system; as for the second, the ego may make an effort to eject and expel it in attempting to restore a homelike, inner-harmonious mode of existence.

The experience of homelessness and encounter with internal otherness is the aftermath of modern processes such as growing self-reflection and critical thinking, scientific endeavors, and secularization. Yet if psychoanalysis helped to shatter the Western sense of home within the self, a sense based on a Cartesian and Kantian tradition that viewed rationality and consciousness as characteristic of human agency, it also employs these human attributes in its search for a cure, albeit with a new demand. The Freudian panacea calls for increasing self-awareness and rational control over and distancing from the two unconscious systems--without an attempt to deny their independent existence or resort to nostalgic efforts to overcome the mental self-estrangement. The theory's narrative, on both the ontogenetic and phylogenetic levels, purports to designate the plight of homelessness as a *constitutive*, non-eradicable condition of the modern self. (Freud articulates a full reversal of the Kantian quest to gradually constitute the world as our home through the use of reason.) This self must learn to endure the knowledge of its being randomly banished from the mental zone of rationality and purposeful action to which it had become so attached, and accept its failed efforts to master and fully comprehend its own psyche; a rebellion against this condition and the unavoidable consequences of social repression is seen as mentally chaotic, even potentially psychotic.

Once Freud has introduced the concept of repression into his discussion in "Das Unheimlich," he is able to redefine the uncanny as "nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old established in the mind, and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression."[22] More precisely, the uncanny is the experience of repressed material suddenly coming back to consciousness and inducing terror. To illustrate this point, Freud cites a Romantic literary source, E. T. A. Hoffmann's short story, "The Sandman." Hoffmann is well-known for creating multiple doubles in his stories, as well as for mixing supernatural motifs with realistic ones; "The Sandman" is no different. This tale depicts a young man, Nathanael, who cannot escape his traumatic childhood memories and the self-destructiveness these memories have impressed within him. As a child Nathanael was occasionally expelled from his father's study, which he loved, once the footsteps of a mysterious stranger were heard approaching from outside. He was told at these times that the "sandman" had arrived and that he must go to sleep. The sandman, a maid explained to him, "is a wicked man who comes to children when they refuse to go to bed and throws handful of sand in their eyes till they bleed and pop out of their heads. Then he throws the eyes into a sack and takes them in the half-moon as food for his children. . . ."[23]

Terrified by the sandman but compelled to know more about him, Nathanael hides one night in the study to find out who the visitor might be. To his great surprise, he learns that the sandman is the lawyer Coppelius, a person he knows well—and abhors. For a while he is able to quietly watch his father and the visitor, who are engaged in a

mysterious undertaking with a hearth, but finally he is discovered and seized by Coppelius, who would have thrown red-hot coal into Nathanael's eyes if his father hadn't intervened. A year later, during one of Coppelius's visits, an explosion occurs in his father's study; while his father dies, Coppelius disappears. Nathanael suffers then his first nervous breakdown, and suffers a second as a student when these memories are reactivated in him. Hoffmann ends the story with a scene in a tower. Nathanael is about to get married, an act that would have symbolized a full recovery. But something on the tower reminds him of Coppelius. He is seized by madness and attempts to throw his fiancee from the tower; when he fails, he jumps to his own death. Among those who gather near the body is Coppelius who has suddenly reappeared in town.

The uncanny effect of the story, according to Freud, originates from a series of repetitions echoing a repressed, unresolved Oedipus complex. In psychoanalytic vocabulary, fear for one's eyes represents a fear of castration, and the father is seen as the potential victimizer. Yet the emotional attitudes of child to father are always ambivalent, a mixture of terror, hate, love, and emulation; images of persecution coexist with images of paternalism and benevolence. From this perspective, Nathanael's father and the evil Coppelius are in fact one and the same.[24] Nathanael's inability to contain and reconcile the dualistic images he had of his father--especially the castigating, evil facet--led him to project these images outward and to embody them in others; the repressed Oedipus complex resurfaces then and is played out through the self's relations to its surroundings. More specifically, Nathanael's paranoia can be understood in terms of a miscarried incorporation of the super-ego.

The "normal" resolution of the Oedipus complex, during which the male child relinquishes his sexual desire for the mother, demands the institution of the super-ego as an integral part of the self. This happens through an identification with the father, who symbolizes for the child the imperatives of the external world. In "The Uncanny," Freud characterizes this agency as one "which has the function of observing and criticizing the self and of exercising a censorship within the mind, and which we become aware of as our conscience."[25] The super-ego, in other words, is a persecuting agency that governs the self through the infliction of self-condemnation and self-hate. In psychotic cases such as Nathanael's, the pressure of this agency intensifies, and the ego suffers from "delusions of being watched." The self defends itself against this painful awareness by a process of *psychic disintegration*: it expels the super-ego so that this agency becomes "isolated, dissociated from the ego,"[26] its menacing effects relegated to objects in the surrounding world.

According to Laplanche and Pontalis, Freud means by projection (*Projektion*) a mechanism of defence "whereby qualities, feelings, wishes or even 'objects,' which the subject refuses to recognize or rejects in himself, are expelled from the self and located in another person or thing."[27] They point, however, to an ambiguity in Freud's use of the term. In one sense, projection simply signifies an operation whereby the self's refusal to acknowledge internal sources of displeasure lead it to pretend these sources were external. In the second sense, however, projection

> means a quasi-real process of expulsion: the subject ejects something he does not want and later rediscovers it in outside reality. One might say schematically that projection is defined in this sense not as 'not wishing to know' but as 'not wishing to be.' The first meaning confines projection

to the status of an illusion, while the second roots it in a primal division between subject and outside world. . . .[28]

It is unclear which interpretation of projection will be more applicable to "The Uncanny."

But the self's aspiration for a new existential condition through the ejection of its super-ego is important for the present discussion. Such ejection can alleviate the sense of mental homelessness and free the ego from the need to negotiate with its acquired otherness; it is the route for regaining one's lost narcissism, a developmental stage that precedes the introjection of the super-ego and the self's recognition of the demands made upon it by the external world.[29] Projection is a means for acquiring a monolithic psyche. Yet this attempt acquires a different meaning once we recall that for Freud the super-ego is the mental representative of tradition and cultural norms. From this perspective, the self's expulsion of the super-ego means in fact a rejection of its chief rival, civilization.

2.   *Social Homelessness, or the Disenchantment of Culture*[30]

"More than anything," writes Freud, the super-ego represents "the cultural past," and it is a mediator through which "the present is changed into the past."[31] This change is achieved through a minute shaping of identities. As the late Freud writes, the super-ego

> play[s] the part of an external world for the ego, although it has become a portion of the internal world. Throughout later life it represents the influence of a person's childhood, of the care and education given him by his parents, and of his dependence on them . . . And in all this it is not only the personal qualities of these parents that is making itself felt, but also everything that had a determining effect on them themselves, the

tastes and standards of the social class in which they lived and the innate dispositions and traditions of the race from which they sprang.[32]

More than any other psychic agency, the super-ego is responsible for situating the self and forming its character. It does so through a two-fold operation. First, the super-ego sets positive moral and social ideals ("ego ideals") to which the individual strives to conform in her behavior and actions; it steers the individual's efforts of sublimation by designating worthy activities and achievements and by furnishing the motivation necessary to engage in such undertakings. But the super-ego, as we have seen above, also has a negative aspect: it acts as a penalizing machine each time the ego fails to accomplish these goals. These two facets of the agency secure continuity in the constitution of social identity across time. The child's super-ego "is in fact constructed on the model not of its parents but of its parents' super-ego; the contents which fill it are the same and it becomes the vehicle of tradition and of all the time-resisting judgments of value which have propagated themselves in this manner from generation to generation."[33] Through the super-ego, then, the collective and impersonal becomes part of the self and is experienced as particular and private, as what is most one's own. Since Freud thinks this agency has such a fundamental position in molding identities, it is fair to say that he views the individual's life-story as unintelligible without a grasp of the collective narratives of which that individual is a part.

This understanding of the self as embedded within tradition and social life via the super-ego establishes a paradoxical affinity between Freud and communitarian political philosophers such as Alasdair MacIntyre. "We all approach our own circumstances," writes MacIntyre, "as bearers of a particular social identity . . . I inherit from the past of

my family, my city, my tribe, my nation, a variety of debts, inheritances, rightful expectations and obligations. These constitute the given of my life, my moral starting point. This is in part what gives my life its own moral particularity."[34] There is no epistemological point of view that is context-free, an archimedean position from which we can conceptualize and fathom the transcendental attributes of the self; to be human means to be placed in social and cultural settings that provide the particular moral language through which we comprehend who we are and who we yearn to be. From this descriptive argument MacIntyre proceeds to aver that without such languages, traditions, and pre-given roles, the self would not be able to construct a meaningful narrative of its life and to evaluate the completeness and coherence of this narrative; life without the horizon of tradition would be impoverished, without direction, arbitrary.

In psychoanalysis, in contrast, the imperatives of civilization and tradition--and the identities these imperatives forge--never become incorporated fully into one's being. The super-ego remains a particular department within the mind, an introjected otherness that can be abjected. We conduct ourselves in the world with a constant threat of such reversibility, since "the primitive stages [of the mind] can always be re-established; the primitive mind is, in the fullest meaning of the word, imperishable."[35] But Freud differs most radically from current communitarian theory in his depiction of the mechanisms through which tradition operates in the self; a constant inner surveillance of the super-ego, which is indifferent to the distinction between transgressive thought and action, is joined with the employment of emotional sanctions such as guilt, self-hate, and anxiety. Rather than enriching the self and infusing its life with meaning, the visit of cultural norms within the mind is colored in Freud's view by the most destructive forces in human

mental and emotional life, which threaten the self with psychic pathologies. What Benjamin said about Kafka's work may therefore apply to Freud's: that it "presents a sickness of tradition"[36]--and by implication a sickness of the bearers of tradition.

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The emotional effects of the super-ego, however, remain most often unaccounted for. "[I]t is very conceivable that the sense of guilt [as well as anxiety] produced by civilization is not perceived . . . and remains to a large extent unconscious, or appears as a sort of *malaise* [*Unbehagen*], a dissatisfaction, for which people use other motivations."[37] But Freud felt that, with contemporary processes of secularization and intensified self-reflection, modern selves may finally be able to uncover some of their unconscious regions and identify the reasons for their dissatisfaction within society. The maxims of civilization and tradition within the mind are increasingly exposed in their exteriority, and while psychoanalysis calls the self to accommodate this exteriority, it also recognizes the prospect of its expulsion from the mind. In fact, Freud feared that such a collective process might be in the making, and that what Laplanche and Pontalis describe as projection in the sense of "not wishing to be" is applicable at the social level.

In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud asserts that "the community, too, evolves a super-ego under whose influence cultural development proceeds." He then continues to depict the relations between this super-ego and the individual's as follows.

> We come across the remarkable circumstances that the mental processes concerned [guilt, anxiety, etc.] are actually more familiar to us and more

accessible to consciousness as they are seen in the group than in the individual man. In him, when tension arises, it is only the aggressiveness of the super-ego which, in the form of reproaches, makes itself noisily heard; its actual demands often remain unconscious in the background. If we bring them to conscious knowledge, we find that they coincide with the precepts of the prevailing cultural super-ego. At this point the two processes, that of the cultural development of the group and that of the cultural development of the individual, are, as it were, always interlocked. For that reason some of the manifestations and properties of the super-ego can be more easily detected in its behavior in the cultural community than in the separate individual.[38]

By the "cultural super-ego," Freud seems to designate two aspects of the individual's super-ego: that which is shared by the community and is concerned with collective life, and that which is "objectified" through public discourse, legal codes, religious and philosophical teachings, and cultural production as a whole. If psychic disintegration of contemporary selves is impending, it will announce itself, according to Freudian methodology, through ominous communal attitudes towards this shared super-ego. Modernity harbors such questioning of social and cultural identity because of a fateful intersection of two major transformations in contemporary society.

First, modernity is characterized by the increasing utilization of Eros for production and by the universalization of libidinal ties, as well as by the elimination of aggression in human intercourse; each of these developments is a necessary pre-condition for the acquisition of stability, security, and prosperity. As discussed above, these goals can be achieved only by intensifying the application of the super-ego and by impersonalizing the nature of its commandments. As long as the super-ego is weak and is applied in a differentiating and excluding manner, chaos may erupt in the social organization. To make the political order less vulnerable, there must be a shift in the balance between socio-

political and psycho-political coercion, between overt and covert sanctions. "It is in keeping with the course of human development," writes Freud, "that external coercion gradually becomes internalized."[39]

The escalation in social repression and internalization of social norms that have characterized modern society coincides with a second transformation: the crisis of the mechanisms through which these processes operated, along with the collapse of traditional sources of justification for them. One such endangered mechanism is leadership, which in Freud's view is essential for a group's formation and continued existence. In *Group Psychology* (1921) he defines "primary group" as "a number of individuals who have put one and the same object [i.e., the leader] in the place of their ego ideal, and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego."[40] A group is founded upon horizontal equality and libidinal bonds that are synthesized with a singular, hierarchical relation based on love, admiration, and emulation. Their shared introjection of the leader into the super-ego (as ego ideal) allows group members to identify with one another and cements their communal cohesion. Moreover, such an introjection is a means for internalizing the cultural norms the leader represents. Without a leader to facilitate such formation of a collectivity, society is prone to "the danger of a state of things which might be termed 'the psychological poverty of groups.'" By this concept Freud presumably means a state where the libidinal ties among the members of the group are weak and the members have few ego-ideals in common. Freud seems to dread the imminent prospect of this over-democratized state. "The present cultural state of America," he writes, "would give us a good opportunity for studying the damage to civilization which is thus to be feared."[41]

But the chief danger to the continuation of social repression and psycho-political monitoring via the super-ego is the final erosion in the status of religion, of which Freud nevertheless strongly approved. While a leader may personify some of the values underlying the social order and induce group members to heed them, it is religion that has been the prime guarantor of the extension and intensification of moral and social norms.[42] Religions provide justifications for the assaults of conscience, veiling the true causes of human discontent with social organizations; they "claim to redeem mankind from . . . [the] sense of guilt which they call sin."[43] The institution of the super-ego, however, has been bolstered by strong *unconscious* exigencies as well. Freud suggests numerous arguments to explain the force religion has had over the human unconscious: the traumatic memory of killing the father in the primal horde led to totemic practices, which are the womb of religion, is one such argument; human weakness in face of nature establishing a longing for a sheltering, all-powerful father is another. Whatever its source of power, religion has lost its credibility for many; with the emergence of critical and scientific thinking in general and psychoanalysis in particular, its allure for the unconscious and the infantile impetuses for embracing it have been unveiled. In Freud's formulation, modern individuals must "honestly admit the purely human origin of all the regulations and precepts of civilization."[44] For the cultural elite this admission is unproblematic, since they are enlightened and able to govern themselves by following rational considerations and calculations of utility.

> But it is another matter with the great mass of the uneducated and oppressed, who have every reason for being enemies of civilization. So long as they do not discover that people no longer believe in God, all is well. But they will discover it, infallibly, even if this piece of writing of mine is not published. And they are ready to accept the results of scientific thinking, but without the change having taken place in them which

scientific thinking brings about in people. *Is there not a danger here that the hostility of these masses to civilization will throw itself against the weak spot that they have found in their task-mistress*? [my emphasis].[45]

With the death of God and the breakdown of traditional ways of rationalizing injustice, the Freudian proletariat are destined to engage in a *deliberate* repudiation and expulsion of the cultural super-ego--the cement of civilization, the guiding light in each person's life. Situated in an age that allows the self to be conscious of the inner imprints of intensified guilt and of how its sexuality has been diminished into an aborted activity, the neurotic, historically constructed self may turn into a "semi-psychotic" one: a self that announces its unwillingness to abide by the identity imposed upon it by civilization via the super-ego. This identity was shaped by a Western tradition that established a heightened conflict in the psychic apparatus of the self by fostering rational conduct, calculability, sobriety, sublimation, productivity, obedience, renunciation, and the like. Unconvinced that history necessarily has either a dialectical or a linear path of evolution, Freud sees the ejection of the super-ego--and the subsequent refusal of the ego to tolerate the maxims of social reality--as a regression to the childish abyss of narcissism.

One can reconstruct two narcissistic threats from Freud's writings. In Freud's first scenario, a full degeneration to a pre-civilized phase occurs, a return to a state where instincts are freely celebrated and one is not plagued by feelings of guilt or shame, by excessive normative regulations, or by an experience of powerlessness and lack. This narcissistic existence according to the "pleasure principle" allows one to avoid dependency and frustration in relation to external objects; one has few libidinal ties in the world and is in love solely with oneself, as exemplified by the father in the primal horde. Freud

believed some of his contemporaries were naively resurrecting such anachronistic states of being. "Here, at the very beginning of the history of mankind, was the 'superman' whom Nietzsche only expected from the future."[46] One may question this suggestion of a similarity between Nietzsche's superman and the father of the primal horde, but the main point is that a human existence that escapes the shackles of civilization is in great peril, in Freud's view. "How ungrateful, how short sighted, after all, to strive for the abolition of civilization! What would then remain would be a state of nature, and that would be far harder to bear. [Nature] destroys us--coldly, cruelly, relentlessly . . . and possibly through the very things that occasioned our satisfaction."[47]

The other path of narcissism that concerns Freud is less regressive: it promises a leap to a future social arrangement that will answer all human needs. "Although practical Marxism has mercilessly cleared away all idealistic systems and illusions," writes Freud of one such political vision, "it has itself developed illusions which are no less questionable and unprovable than the earlier ones."[48] Marxism's promises of material plenitude and the termination of *Ananke*, of relief from the compulsion to work, of human relations free from aggression, and of a social order without political domination are perhaps more dangerous than religious messianism; they betray a childish notion that the social world can and should be molded so as to maximize human happiness. Given this intellectual context, the political-historical task of psychoanalysis is to ensure the reign of the "reality principle," which entails acceptance of the world as it is and a rational-instrumental accommodation to the world's limitations. Psychoanalysis steers the self to adopt an ethic that resembles Weber's ethic of responsibility; it espouses a distance of the self from its burning passions and calls for materializing these passions only when and

if external conditions allow. The Freudian passions, of course, are instinctual and pleasure oriented, not political and value-based, but when each psyche becomes a battleground for the struggle between individual and civilization, each person must become a responsible politician.

III.   *The Narrative of Subjection*

The Freudian critique of modernity is often seen as originating in the psychoanalytic view of the self. According to this interpretation, Freud first developed notions such as the instincts, repression, and the super-ego (or conscience) in order to explain the psychic apparatus; only gradually did he apply these concepts to the study of society, since he realized that the individual cannot be understood outside of a historical context and that methodological individualism is flawed. (In our case, cultural homelessness would be a logical development of its psychic counterpart.) There is a chronological basis for this claim, since Freud wrote his main socio-political writings rather late in life, after the bulk of his conceptual innovations had been established. (For example, "Civilization and Its Discontents" was published in 1930; "The Future of an Illusion" in 1927; and "Group Psychology" in 1920. "Totem and Taboo," which was published in 1913, is an exception, but its subject is not modernity.) Most of Freud's interpreters, therefore, differ only in their valuation of this extension from micro to macro: while some, such as Paul Roazen, see it as deepening our understanding of such political phenomenon as leadership and group formation, others, including Wollheim, are more skeptical, seeing this extension as

speculative and not sufficiently coherent.[49]

This interpretation is incomplete. If, instead, we were to reject a naive positivist epistemology and inquire into the normative presuppositions behind psychoanalysis, we could see that the way Freud conceptualized the self and its psychic development already betrays a consciousness of entrapment. He suggests a model of the self that contrasts with nineteenth-century models, according to which the self could be impenetrable to its social environment, or could conceive of itself as the source and shaper of its surroundings. In psychoanalysis, eschewing these narcissistic illusions becomes a prerequisite for normality. From the outset, Freud's theoretical constructions reflect a historical moment, and the (unintentional and implicit) task of combating proto-entrapment notions is constitutive of his project throughout. This translation from the macro to the micro is evident in his theories of child development in general and the Oedipal complex in particular. (This complex pertains only to boys, but the oral and anal stages of development are similar for both sexes).

According to Freud, in the pre-Oedipal period the boundaries between self and world are blurred, and the child is unaware of her worthlessness, dependency, and isolation. This holds particularly true for the oral stage, in which the child strives both to merge with and to master the world through an act of incorporation: sucking. There is no clear sense of being a distinct entity at this period, yet the child wants to "contain" the objects (especially those pertaining to nourishment) around her and deny their separateness. "During the oral stage of organization of the libido, the act of obtaining erotic mastery over an object coincides with that object's destruction," writes Freud.[50] This operation

(which is mostly a fantasy) brings the child erotic pleasure, and although the mouth is the prime organ for this activity, others such as the eyes may fulfill a similar function.

During the anal phase, however, the child already displays some frustration in her relation to the world. She begins to ascertain the limits of her position, but wishes to violate them through sadistic maneuvers. The denial of the independence of objects is more aggressive and deliberate, and is manifested by efforts to control the surroundings by positing herself as the sole *generator* of things; the excretion of faeces simulates birth, "they acquire the meaning of 'baby'—for babies," writes Freud.[51] Through games of retention and release in the anus, of creating things and then dissolving them at will, the child gains a megalomanic sense herself. Objects must now be recognized as extraneous; their origin, however, remains oneself. Most importantly, according to Freud the child's sense of self-sufficiency and autonomy is boosted because both the anal and the oral phases are autoerotic, i.e., the child finds sexual satisfaction without a need for others, solely by stimulations of the erotogenic zones. At this stage of primary narcissism only one's own ego (or body) is cathected; no dependency on the world yet exists, because there is no investment of objects (especially not of the mother) with libido.

The Oedipal stage symbolizes the radical termination of these misconceptions of omnipotence and merging. At this stage the child goes through crucial developments that include identification with others, adoption of a sexual identity, and the centering of sexual activity in the genitals. But the primary transformation is of the *male* child, whose relation to the outside world is redefined: after making his first object choice, he is forced to renounce it. During the phallic period, the male child starts to develop a sexual

attraction toward his mother. This wish to become her lover is joined with his efforts to prolong his reign over the world by ordering and manipulating his new sexual object. The boy's attitude toward his father at this period is a mixture of love and hostility, the latter due to a sense of competition. The child may endure these feelings for some time until, after viewing the genitals of the female sex, he realizes the possibility of losing his penis. The fear of castration--an act he thinks may be carried out by his father--induces him to relinquish and repress his desire for the mother and to identify with the presumably all-powerful figure that threatens him.[52] In Freud's last major published work, *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1938), he writes that "if psychoanalysis could boast of no other achievement than the discovery of the repressed Oedipus complex, that alone would give it a claim to be included among the precious new acquisitions of mankind."[53] Freud believes the Oedipal complex "forms the nucleus of . . . neuroses,"[54] since the myriad developments the child goes through could fail in various ways. Now the fact that Freud makes this narrative the core of both his ontogenesis theory and the etiology of neurosis invites questions about the symbolic import of the Oedipus complex and the stages that precede it.

Marcuse sees the meaning of the Oedipal wish as "the eternal infantile desire for the archetype of freedom: freedom from want . . . Eros here fights its first battle against everything the reality principle stands for: against the father, against domination, sublimation, resignation."[55] By going through the complex, the child acquires independence and the ability to act in the world--but only after accepting the need to work and produce, to restrain and delay his instinctual satisfactions. Similarly, Brown views the complex as the end of idealized omnipotence. "The essence of the Oedipal

complex," he writes, "is the project of becoming God--in Spinoza's formula, *causa sui*."[56] The child's desire for the mother signifies his wish to become father to himself, thereby being the cause of himself and fleeing from the threat of death. While both of these interpretation are on the mark, they fail to see the connection between the Oedipal complex and Freud's historical situatedness.[57] An examination of the complex within the proper historical context reveals its symbolic import precisely as an antipode to visions of narcissistic omnipotence expressed in nineteenth-century philosophy (epitomized, perhaps, by Fichte's all-constituting "I"). The analysis of the family dynamic and of the path of development this dynamic dictates can be seen as a *parable* whose referent is the European problematic of entrapment: the Oedipal narrative contains a veiled normative position as to the proper, "realistic" relation between self and existing social orders.

With the renunciation of his desire for the mother, the male child begins to accept the separate existence of objects and to recognize that these are governed by modes of interaction that escape his control. Even the object most dear to the self--the relation to which could shape all other relations--must be acknowledged as ungovernable and as a source of pain. (In psychoanalysis the word "object" refers to a human being, but the association with inanimate things is not accidental, and the relation of self to other could be seen as influencing the self's relation to its surroundings as a whole.) In contrast to the autoerotic oral and anal stages, the denial of primal wishes inaugurates a consciousness that must learn to accommodate frustration of fundamental needs and to admit constitutive limits on well-being. Each child begins from, as it were, an anthropocentric vision: the world is centered around him, obediently serving his needs for nourishment and care. But with the Oedipal complex this vision terminates; the child

experiences himself at the periphery of the environment he inhabits.

To achieve maturity, then, the self must accept that lack is ingrained at the core of its existence and that the answer to this state is always deferred, partial, and transitory. Others are necessary even for this incomplete answer to emotional and sexual needs, and the self forms with them complex relations that are characterized by conflict and subordination no less than by love and equality. Because of the disappointment in and conditioning by others that the self experiences, one could say that the Oedipus complex underscores the powerlessness of the self; healthy psychic development, however, requires that one not resort to radical attempts to flee from this predicament. Through a theory of sexual maturation, then, Freud implicitly delineates a reversal of power relations between self and social environment: the psychoanalytic picture of the self is at odds with the Rousseauian and Marxian belief in the modern self's ability to transform the circumstances of its life, and instead accepts as inevitable the distance, non-transparency, and anguish that characterize the relation of the self to its world.

Any attempt the child makes to avoid these lessons and to hold on to notions of control over and fusion with cathexed objects is counter-productive. "The more powerful the Oedipus complex was . . . the stricter will be the domination of the super-ego over the ego later on,"[58] observes Freud. The self may become relatively free from mental afflictions and functional as an adult only by unconsciously accepting its *principled subjection* to the father and society, admitting the formative role of their expectations. Psychoanalysis oscillates, striving to find a balance between two claims: that guilt as the product of cultural norms is a major cause for psychic pathologies, and that accepting the

presence of the introjected otherness in the mind and abiding by its rules is a *sine qua non* of normality. Hence the successful resolution of the Oedipus complex implies that the self must relinquish the quest for wholeness and the independent formation of one's being: the ideals the self strives to materialize are not generated from within, an expression of authenticity, but are rather an external concoction. If Herder and Nietzsche believed in the aesthetic creation of a unique identity with self-forged horizons, the Freudian self assents to the introjection of a commanding agency that spawns sameness.

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By presenting the pregenital modes of acting and being as destined to be overcome in the normal progression, psychoanalysis is able to expose political-ethical aspirations that seem to be holding to these modes as somehow defective. Yet acknowledging the centrality of the Oedipus complex can advance another looming threat to the social order: femininity. Since the girl cannot be emasculated, her development is radically different from the boy's, though there is no biologically determined difference in their character. "The fear of castration being thus excluded in the little girl, a powerful motive also drops out for the setting-up of a super-ego and for breaking off the infantile genital organization."[59] The normalization and socialization of women is chiefly determined by the outside, by "intimidation" and "upbringing"; it is therefore, according to Freud, more contingent and reversible. Women's lack of the full Oedipal experience, asserts the late Freud, also makes them less disposed to sublimation. "The work of civilization has become increasingly the business of men, it confronts them with ever more difficult tasks and compels them to carry out instinctual sublimations of which women are little capable."

With men investing their libido in the work of civilization and women less interested in such work, the woman "adopts a hostile attitude towards it [civilization]."[60]

The lines between the sexes, however, are always obfuscated. "[A]ll human individuals, as a result of their bisexual disposition and of cross-inheritance," Freud notes, "combine in themselves both masculine and feminine characteristics, so that pure masculinity and femininity remain theoretical constructions of uncertain content."[61] Femininity (a quality not confined to the female sex as such) becomes the symbol of a weaker sense of justice and a lesser absorption with the erection of the social order; it is the permanent, agitating political force, the seducer that causes history to linger on the brink of chaos. Psychoanalysis implies that if the social order is to be preserved, femininity must be dominated by masculinity within each psyche.

We can see, then, why according to Freud the institution of the super-ego as the outcome of the Oedipus complex "represents the most important characteristic of the development both of the individual and of the species."[62] On the one hand, the establishment of the super-ego symbolizes the independence of the child who acquires a sense of distinct agency and becomes able to engage with society according to the expected norms. On the other hand, the presence of the super-ego means that instead of incorporating, begetting, and mastering the surroundings as it did in pre-Oedipal stages, the post-Oedipal (male) self is invariably situated in and shaped by its social circumstances and their historical formation. "The past, the tradition of the race and of the people, lives in the ideologies of the super-ego."[63] Without forgoing these ideologies, psychoanalysis asks how their raw force might be mitigated.

IV. Memory and Amelioration

The super-ego possesses a dominant position in the psyche because the events associated with its introduction have been repressed. At the collective level, a nation tends to obliterate from the shared historical narrative the murder of its founding father (e.g., Moses); at the individual level, each person assays to forget the wish to do away with his father. Aiming to loosen the grip of the repressed, psychoanalysis calls for an intimate relation with the past. External remembrance is insufficient; the past must not only be cognitively grasped as one's own, but must also be relived. In therapy, memory is reexperienced through transference, wherein the patient is able to reactivate his early fears, sexual attractions, ambivalent feelings, etc. The patient sees the analyst as "a reincarnation of some important figure out of his childhood or past, and consequently transfers on to him feelings and reactions which undoubtedly applied to this prototype."[64] These feelings and reactions may be of love, emulation, and attempts to please (positive transference), or of hate, fear, and mistrust (negative transference).

The patient's relation to the analyst, in fact, parallels the relation between the ego and the super-ego, and by putting the analyst in place of his parents, the patient "is also giving him the power which his super-ego exercises over his ego, since his parents were . . . the origins of his super-ego."[65] Through transference, then, the self is able to remold its relation to the super-ego by understanding and mitigating both the fear of persecution and the force that certain ego ideals have within it. This does not free the self from its psychic

and social traps, yet it makes them more bearable. While the indispensability of the super-ego is not questioned by psychoanalysis, the formative contents of this agency are brought to the surface through therapy--a process that already happens in modern society at large through practices of reflection upon and criticism of shared tradition and norms. The therapy thus renders the ideals and maxims of the super-ego seem less arbitrary. The self is able to identify the events that influenced it and the figures it unconsciously emulates, thereby transforming its character and personality from something contingent into an intelligible narrative. Moreover, this undertaking empowers the self to establish a necessary distance from the contents of the super-ego; they cease to monopolize the self's identity, becoming a part that it must learn how to cope with or even to alter--rather than acting as the governing force of its being.

Yet through memory, of course, the self is able to confront not just the events associated with the personal and communal Oedipal complex, but others that are related to the denial of its wishes, which cause its phobias, compulsive behaviors, bodily symptoms, anxiety, traumatic dreams, and other phenomena. Psychic illness is inherently connected to forgetfulness or repression. "Gaps appear in the patient's memory even while he narrates his case: actual occurrences are forgotten, the chronological order is confused or causal connections are broken, with unintelligible results. *No neurotic case history is without amnesia of some kind or other*"[66] [my emphasis]. The task of the analyst is to assist the patient in reconstructing this jumbled experience into a meaningful narrative without distortion; the act of memory has a therapeutic, if not redemptive, quality. The presupposition underlying this unprecedented type of cure has been articulated by Benjamin in his "Theses on the Philosophy of History." "[N]othing that has ever happened

should be regarded as lost for history," he writes. "To be sure, only a redeemed mankind receives the fullness of its past--which is to say, only for a redeemed mankind has its past become citable in all its moments."[67] Psychoanalysis adopts a similar tenet: it professes that nothing in the past goes into oblivion, that what may seem to have dissolved into nothingness is very much alive and makes uncompromising claims upon the present. The past is where the drama of the present takes place.

The past, however, does not open itself easily; it is imbued with resistance, and "the patient brings out of the armory of the past the weapons with which he defends himself against the progress of the treatment--weapons that we must wrest from him one by one."[68] As the therapy advances and the crucial moments within the past have been targeted, the patient may circumvent the impending remembrance by "acting out" his neurosis more forcefully than he ever did before. He repeats compulsively the behavior or symptoms he is tormented by. The therapist should not become perplexed and discouraged by this, and "must allow the patient time to become more conversant with this resistance with which he has now become acquainted, to *work through* it [Durcharbeitung] . . . ."[69] The well-being of the over-civilized individual demands a laborious, tenacious disarming of "black holes," of traumatic and formative memories that tend to suck his being into themselves. The conception of time behind this working-through is that personal and collective histories do not form a linear or dialectical totality. For Freud (as for Benjamin), time is not homogenous: it is composed of unique moments that define one's existence thereafter, moments that create cycles that may repeat indefinitely. This view is incompatible with the teleological, prevalent nineteenth-century conceptions of time. More generally, psychoanalysis calls for a full reversal of

Enlightenment and Post-Enlightenment convictions, inviting us to repossess the past instead of helplessly striving to possess the future. "What we desire," writes Freud, "is that the ego, emboldened by the certainty of our help, shall dare to take the offensive in order to reconquer what has been lost."[70] For psychoanalysis, it seems, modernity is an age that should be defined less by its perpetual opening towards the future than by its attempt to salvage what is constantly slipping away.

V.   *Conclusion*

Following Otto Rank's study *Der Doppelgänger* (1914), Freud suggests in one place that the idea of the "double" originated in ancient, "narcissistic" societies that distinguished between body and soul in their attempt to maintain an illusion of eternal life.[71] Doubling was in this case a mere fantasy, a sign for primitive immaturity. "But . . . this stage has been surmounted [and] the 'double' reverses its aspect," writes Freud. "From having been an assurance of immortality it becomes the uncanny harbinger of death."[72] This harbinger, the super-ego or the voice of conscience, is no longer a mere invention, as is the soul, but is a concrete psychic reality. Freud portrays the self as divided and its parts engaged in a continuous struggle; agreeing with Kant, he views this internal struggle as intertwined with the agonism between the self and civilization. For both theorists, civilization represents the extension, expression, and objectification of human powers. But if for Kant the hiatus between the empirical self and civilization on the one hand and practical reason on the other was gradually subsiding (yet not disappearing), Freud

suspected that the hiatus between the doubles was progressively waxing. We witness in our age the intensification of normalization in general and of sexual practices in particular, the abatement of aggression and attraction in the daily interactions of civil society, and the structural channelling of instinctual energy into production. All of these calls for self-control establish a greater schism in the mind between the ego/Id and the super-ego, and hence between self and social institutions.

With the erection of civilization, the "deathliness" of the harbinger becomes more acute: it inflicts more self-hate, torments of conscience, unrealizable idealization in every sphere of human existence; at the same time, paradoxically, its exterior sources become more manifest, its modes of operation theorized, its foundations questioned. The marriage of these realizations with the rigid and all-engulfing prescriptions of thought and conduct render the modern self not-at-home within its mind and its society/culture. These two types of homelessness within our home undermine Weber's response to modernity. For Weber, culture was the essential container of values, of patterns of life, of accumulated human ·rience; submersion within it allowed an individual to rationally construct a meaningful course of life. But Freud exposes the belligerent aspect of culture and doubts the function of rationality and existence of autonomy in human deliberation. Weber suggested the disenchantment of the world and the present discomfort of humans in what was once an orchestrated, interwoven cosmos; Freud extends this theme of homelessness, bereaving the self of what Weber thought were the last anchors and refuges of belonging.

Freud was concerned that, with a rebellion against this plight, semi-psychotic reactions

could evolve. Once the duality of the mind has become fully activated, individuals may be enticed to eject what has been imposed upon them and thus to flee the sense of internal and external doubleness. From the aging heart of Europe, Freud watched apprehensively as some wished to transform the social world into an enlarged commune where there are no "mine" and "not-mine" or "me" and "them," while others aspired to cast off the Jodeao-Christian moral tradition, reviving the myth of a pre-conflicted selfhood, of the Aryan, tribal warrior. Hence, despite the concern it voices concerning the dire plight of the modern, psychoanalysis conceptualizes sanity as an assent to doubleness, an affirmation of internal fracture and external incompatibility.

Chapter Four:

Michel Foucault: From the Prison-house of

Language to the Silence of the Panopticon

Abbreviations:

AK	Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972).
DP	Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Modern Prison*, trans. A. Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).
HS	Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol. 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1980).
LCP	Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (New York: Cornell University Press, 1977).
MC	Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Vintage Books, 1988).
PK	Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings, 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).
PPC	Michel Foucault, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977-1984*, ed. Lawrence Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1990).
OT	Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973).
SP	Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in H. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 208-228.

Introduction

"Maybe the target nowadays," writes Foucault, "is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are."[1] The present, according to Foucault, witnesses a unique sense of crisis: a distancing of the self from itself, a mistrust of existing subjectivities, a quest for new identities. The norms that have been governing our notions of responsible citizenship, of acceptable sexual identities, of what reason may mean, are no longer self-evident-- while still being a part of us. From this perspective, the Foucauldian project is both a continuation of and a departure from Freud. Psychoanalysis, as we saw above, introduced the idea of a divided self, a conscious ego that recognizes itself as impelled and shaped both by the unconscious and by an internalized normalizing agency, the super-ego. The domination of this agency in particular establishes an inner-experience of uncanniness and homelessness within our home, an encounter that is constitutive of modern subjectivity. Yet whereas Freud, who was fully aware of the malignant effects of the super-ego, believed a radical rebellion against this moral-regulative "garrison" within us would breed a disastrous anarchy where the instincts would reign, for Foucault it is precisely our growing aloofness from and awareness of certain internalized normalizing maxims that is a source of hope; our acknowledgement of their social, contingent, and coercive nature may lead us to finally reject and eject them. In this sense, the Foucauldian project begins where Freud urged us to halt.

Psychoanalysis identified the emerging rift within Western selves; Foucault wishes to insert his work within that rift. Freud saw the domination of the super-ego as a

precondition for the socially conscious conduct of the individual and for the survival of civilization; Foucault bids us to espouse an ethos of critical self-questioning in respect to the regulative truths that guide our actions and define our identity. Such questioning, he insists, is not a threat for the existence of society but on the contrary, vital for its future. Foucault is neither a utopian like Marcuse nor a nostalgist like Heidegger: the restoration of a subjectivity that is at home within itself and the world is foreign to him; we are "always-already" within a network of power, combatting its effects both from without and from within. Yet he believes that an alleviation in the predicament of the modern self is both possible and desirable; his own writings should be seen as fostering the current "struggle against the forms of subjection—against the submission of subjectivity."[2]

Foucault's critics, however, have often questioned whether in engaging in struggles against subjection/subjectification Foucault succeeded in eliminating from his work notions of subjectivity in general and Western ones in particular. In Habermas's view, genealogical historiography that purports to be an objective study of changing power configurations "follows the movement of a radically historicist extinction of the subject and ends up in an unholy subjectivism." More specifically, Habermas avers that Foucault manifests this subjectivist foundation through the "presentistic, relativistic, [and] cryptonormative"[3] character of his later work, which is chiefly concerned with advancing ethical/political causes of the moment while carrying the banner of objectivity. Nancy Fraser also sees Foucault as invariably affirming a notion of subjectivity, one that has Western sources. Foucault's critique of contemporary society, she claims, suggests underlying "Kantian notions." In understanding Foucault, "one cannot help but appeal to such concepts as the violation of dignity and autonomy involved in the treating of people

solely as means to be causally manipulated . . . these Kantian notions are clearly related to the liberal norms of legitimacy and illegitimacy defined in terms of limits and rights."[4] Taylor also comments about underlying notions of selfhood in Foucault, but his point is a more general one. He argues that Foucault's concept of power can make sense only after we have presupposed a set of evaluations and preferences that are constitutive of the self. "[S]omething is only an imposition on me against a background of desires, interests, purposes, that I have," writes Taylor. "It is only an imposition if it makes some dent in them, if it frustrates them, prevents them from fulfillment."[5]

These critics are correct, it seems to me, in pointing to the normative concerns and ambiguous notions of selfhood that lurk behind the Foucauldian project. But one should not overemphasize this background, since the *gist* of Foucault's work remains *negative*, more committed to questioning the present than to affirming an alternative one. This signifies a reversal of the Weberian and Freudian conceptualization of entrapment. For these two writers, the modern self was snared because the external conditions of the present denied something essential to the self: the possibility of attaining a unified personality, in Weber's case, and a self that has less impaired instinctual satisfaction, a reduced sense of inner-strife, and greater sublimation, in Freud's. For Foucault, in contrast, the modern self is trapped not because of specific needs and external conditions the environment denies it, but rather because of the identity--any identity--that the social matrix imposes upon it from without and entices it to embrace from within. In fact, accounts of the self that are scientifically based (Freud) or that contain essentialist presuppositions and affirm the place of history in shaping the self (Weber) become, for Foucault, part of the modern malaise--and hence must be rebuffed by archaeological and

genealogical means. This negative and subjectless character of the Foucauldian critique is important: it contributes both to Foucault's extension and to his intensification of the entrapment perspective. Once subjectivity--its specific contents and the notion itself--are viewed as a fabrication that needs to be contested and resisted, the critical enterprise inevitably unveils domain after domain, layer after layer, through which the self is constituted. Thus Foucault is propelled to extend the problematic of entrapment to include new spheres of culture such as language and knowledge, as well as to elaborate a theory that sees power as intrinsic to social relations and practices as such.

The outline of this chapter is as follows. The first section further explores Foucault's critique of both Freud and Weber, especially as far as their notions of subjectivity are concerned. I then distinguish between two snares that can be found in Foucault, both of which are conceptualized in terms of the imposition of identities and ways of life that they involve. Sections II-IV examine the archaeological trap that presents the emergence of post-Enlightenment notions of subjectivity as the upshot of structural transformations. According to Foucault, the modern epistemological arrangement (episteme) demands a sovereign, unified, and rational subject, and it leads, moreover, to an unprecedented quest for producing the human sciences, bodies of knowledge through which we have come to understand and define ourselves. Foucault sees the effects of this predicament as particularly evident in our language, which is progressively taken over by confining, scientific discourses. As I shall argue, the structural-epistemic snare is therefore essentially a linguistic one, and the way Foucault seeks to combat it is also through language, i.e., avant-garde literature.

In sections V-VIII I discuss Foucault's second snare: his theory of power. Foucault rebukes modernity since he thinks contemporary forms of power are omnipresent and highly productive; they concoct the self and render its practice of freedom--which in principle it is capable of--a rather strenuous task. But, as I shall demonstrate below, the dynamic between power and freedom in Foucault is far from clear and the distinction between them, in the absence of any presuppositions about the self, remains ambiguous. This difficulty, and the impalpability of power in general, suggests that the modern, disciplined self could recognize and exteriorize the imprints of power it bears only by espousing a new attitude: an unrelenting ethos of doubt toward itself and the truths that guide it. Before this ethos is elaborated on in the last section, however, I will conduct a comparison between Foucault's and Weber's understandings of discipline that sheds new light on the former's work.

I. *Historicizing the Psychoanalytic Subject, Dispersing*

the Personality: Foucault's Critique of Freud And Weber

In the entrapment and proto-entrapment tradition, modernity is criticized on account of a specific vision of subjectivity: the agent of practical reason, the non-alienated worker, the overman, the personality, the neurosis-free self. The afflictions and ills of society are threatening because they deny a particular type of self its potentials, needs, and freedoms, however these may be defined. We have seen that for proto-entrapment writers notions of the self are also a vehicle for overcoming discontent, whereas for entrapment writers

these notions do not have such a liberating function. For Foucault, in any event, the subject is but an instrumental invention, its construction a fiction motivated by a will to knowledge, a quest for philosophical certainty, an imperative for domination. Modernity is characterized by a growing urge to fix the self's identity--to define its boundaries, interrogate its nature, pose it as the Other of other selves. In his archaeology, Foucault follows the French structuralism of the fifties and sixties, studying thought in terms of an underlying order and of rules that belie phenomenological notions such as will, intentions, and consciousness. He continues to attack the notion of subjectivity in his genealogical phase. "Where the soul pretends unification or the self a coherent identity, the genealogist sets out to study the beginning--numberless beginnings whose faint traces and hints of color are readily seen by an historical eye. The analysis of descent permits the dissociation of the self, its recognition and displacement as an empty synthesis, in liberating a profusion of lost events."[6]

In *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault studied--without openly saying so--the "lost events" and the "exteriority of accidents"[7] that lie behind the emergence of one aspect of the Freudian self. The super-ego appears in Foucault's interpretation less as an archaic ingredient of the psyche required by civilization as such, than as a product of very specific and recent discursive and institutional transformations. As in his other works, here Foucault points to a global metamorphosis in the Western understanding of the self by illuminating events at the social periphery and by juxtaposing different epochs. The idea of impounding the madman and separating him from society is a relatively recent one. Beginning at the middle of the seventeenth century, Foucault notes, the madman was confined in the same space with the poor, vagabond, homeless, criminal, and unemployed.

This unprecedented confinement was essentially negative in its operation: its goal was to intern the unproductive population that threatened emerging bourgeois society, not to interrogate and reform this population. This intention changed with the introduction of the asylum during the early nineteenth century.

For reformers of that time such as the Quaker Tuke and the French humanist Pinel, the objective was the reintegration of the madman into society. This was to be achieved by the inauguration of a new moral and social self-consciousness within the patient. According to Foucault, the asylum, which separated the madman from other categories of the confined, operated as a system of constant surveillance and observation whereby the patient was punished for any abnormal and improper behavior. This semi-behavioral regime of correction constructed a milieu of *fear* whereby the madman was "kept in perpetual anxiety, ceaselessly threatened by Law and Transgression."[8] Yet the reformers realized that the fear--in order to be effective and lasting--should be supported by means that exceeded external sanctions. The madman, therefore, was trained to fear the insane and deviant forces within himself, to objectify himself and become both conscious and responsible for his own abnormality.

> [T]he madman . . . . must feel morally responsible for everything within him that may disturb morality and society, and must hold no one but himself responsible for the punishment he receives. The assignation of guilt . . . . becomes both the concrete form of coexistence of each madman with his keeper, and the form of awareness that the madman must have of his own madness.

The asylum molded the patient into the perpetual warden of his own transgression: he is trained to recognize his insanity as socially and morally deplorable, to contain it through

the exercise of self-distancing and an identification with the critical gaze of the Other, and to punish its eruptions by the self-afflictions of guilt--a process which, in Freudian terms, we could call the acquisition of a super-ego.[9] (Foucault himself does not use this term, nor does he discuss Freud in this context.) The Freudian depiction of a self divided between its ego and an acquired, normalizing agency emerges in Foucault as a reflection of *a uniquely post-Enlightenment historical development*: the asylum exhibits and accentuates the growing pressure in modernity to ensure the internalization of and conformity to social norms of even the most marginal community members. As the evolving social and economic orders became increasingly dependent upon an obedient and productive citizenry and labor force, the asylum became a microcosm of this social universe: it "reduces differences, represses vice, eliminates irregularities," and in general "denounces everything that opposes the essential virtues of society."[10]

Foucault performs a more explicit historicization of the Freudian subject and divulges it as an ensemble of contingent events in later works, especially in *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*. As we saw in the previous chapter, an essential claim of psychoanalysis is that the self is instinctual by nature, that the sexual drive in particular is its source of energy and a force that affects its desires, thoughts, dreams, speech, and conduct in unconscious ways. Not only is the sexual drive omnipresent in all of these domains of life, but it also shapes humans from the outset: the specific and contingent path of a child's sexual ontogenesis is seen as constitutive of her adult life, affecting her character and being as a whole. According to Foucault, however, the pansexualism of Freudianism should be seen as the culmination of discursive developments that originated at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when an increasing apprehension in regard to the reproductive

capabilities and health of the social body gave rise to discourses on sex in fields such as medicine, pedagogy, and psychology. For these sciences, and primarily for the first, sex was a pivotal explanatory device.

[T]here was scarcely a malady or physical disturbance to which the nineteenth century did not impute at least some degree of sexual etiology. From the bad habits of children to the phthises of adults, the apoplexies of old people, nervous maladies and the degeneration of the race, the medicine of that era wove an entire network of sexual causality to explain them.[11]

From this perspective, the Freudian self is seen less as an innovation than as the fruition of discursive events germane to new social and political concerns. For Foucault, then, both the sexual instinct and the super-ego are artifacts brought about by a cluster of institutions, practices, and discourses, not universal and unalterable features of the self, as psychoanalysis claims. (I return below to a discussion of Foucault's notion of bio-power.)

Despite his criticism of psychoanalysis, however, Foucault also had reasons to praise its view of the self. Freud acknowledged the divided, conflictual nature of the self as well as its restlessness and compulsive quests for transgression; he allowed unreason to surface as a critical force in humans, depicting the self less as a master of its life than as a prisoner of its haphazard circumstances and history. In *The Order of Things*, Foucault hails psychoanalysis as a "counter-science" that has a subversive role in modern thought and culture. Psychoanalysis (as well as ethnology) has a privileged position for us, since it forms "a perpetual principle of dissatisfaction, of calling into question, of criticism and contestation of what may seem, in other respects, to be established."[12] Against the

autonomous, unified, and rationally governed vision of the self, psychoanalysis poses a chaotic and fragmented void that induces bewilderment and a sense of powerlessness. To put it differently, psychoanalysis undermines the illusions that lurk behind (what Foucault calls) "humanistic" visions of the self, such as Weber's notion of the personality.

In contrast to his overall critical stance towards Freud, Foucault has much in common with Weber. As Foucault himself noted, they share an intellectual project that may be described as "an ontology of the present," one that asks, "What is the present field of possible experience?"[13] In their answers, Foucault and Weber concur upon two fundamental points. First, from a methodological point of view, they hold that the self should be studied through an analysis of its empirical, external circumstances; life-orders or apparatuses (*dispositif*) such as the market, bureaucracy, the asylum, the prison, and the school are seen as constitutive of the self. To illustrate this point, they juxtapose the present circumstances of the self with past conditions and/or other cultures and the types of selves produced there. Second, Foucault and Weber arrive at rather similar conclusions regarding the predicament of the modern self: both see this self as disciplined and ruled by internalized norms that extinguish individuality; they see the social and economic orders of modernity as shaping productive and useful individuals suited to specific functional needs, a process that affects bodily conduct, habits of thought, gesture, and emotion; and, finally, both agree that the modern self tends to relate to itself and others through self-objectification and myriad rationalizations.[14] In fact, Foucault seems to have followed Weber rather closely in his depiction of discipline, as we shall see in the last section.

But wheieas Weber laments the difficulties of establishing a personality under contemporary social conditions, Foucault castigates notions of the self that resemble the personality, seeing them as part of the modern malaise, as an artificial attempt to avoid the imminent fragmentation and dispersion of life in general and in modernity in particular. Weber, as we saw above, posits the personality--with its quest for inner-unity, a coherent narrative, self-imposed truths, and an ascetic existence--as a partial response to the increasing segmentation of domains of action and value and to the sense of meaninglessness this predicament generates. From Foucault's perspective, however, the personality longs for the enduring Sameness of the self in a world that in myriad ways already begets such Sameness: the structure of our knowledge, the working logic of our institutions establish precisely such a circumscription of subjectivity. Rather than resisting the detrimental effects of modernity--which Weber identified so well--the personality ends up supporting them. Hence Foucault adamantly rejects Weber's ascetic view and its quest for certainty.

> Max Weber posed the question: If one wants to behave rationally and regulate one's actions according to true principles, what part of one's self should one renounce? What is the ascetic price of reason? To what kind of asceticism should one submit? I posed the opposite question: How have certain kinds of interdictions required the price of certain kinds of knowledge about oneself? What must one know about oneself in order to be willing to renounce anything?[15]

The personality knows itself as a subject in need of guiding principles and a lasting Identity; to construct itself as such, it espouses a normative "inner-core" and the ascetic professionalism of modernity, systematically eschewing alternatives of action and value as well as the threat of dispersion through self-expressivism. Weber still believed in the possibility of establishing a subjectivity on the basis of rational, conscious choices: despite

his overall pessimism, then, the roles of consciousness and an autonomous will remain

unquestioned in his work. In this respect he embraced humanism, which for Foucault is

a principal target, especially as it expresses itself in Husserlian phenomenology and in

Sartre's *pour-soi.*

> One can say that all Western civilization has been subjugated (*assujettie'*),
> and philosophers have only certified the fact by referring all thought and
> all truth to consciousness, to the Self, to the Subject. In the rumbling that
> shakes us today, perhaps we have to recognize the birth of a world where
> the subject is not one but split, not sovereign but dependent, not an
> absolute origin but a function ceaselessly modified.[16]

For Foucault the self knows no transcendence: it is always embedded in or shaped by an

episteme, a language, a matrix of power. It has no point of origin and no principle of

truth, but is always in a state of flux and modification. "The self is not a substance; it is

a form and this form is not above all always identical to itself."[17] Whereas moderns such

as Weber view the dispersion of the self as an existential threat, Foucault, like other post-

moderns, celebrates it: unless a masking Identity is forced upon the self by others or by

itself, it reveals difference and heterogeneity, rapture and indeterminacy. Both Weber and

Freud are guilty, in this view, of distorting these features of the self, the first by calling

for an abiding set of ultimate values that perpetuate Sameness, the second by posing as

given and inescapable a psychic structure of the self while ignoring the particular

historical configuration through which this self emerged. For Foucault and the notion of

negative entrapment he advances, the task is to expose the manner by which our identities

have been progressively impounded and concocted. A central reason for this process, for

Foucault, has been the colonialization of modern thought by a will to knowledge, a will

that has acquired a conspicuous force due to a unique epistemic arrangement.

II.   *The Doubles of Modernity and Discursive Proliferation*

Weber and Freud saw the human sciences as a valuable aid to the modern self: the cultural sciences allow one to understand present social circumstances and hence to develop a *Weltanschauung*, and psychology helps alleviate the various neuroses that contemporary life generates. With Foucault, in contrast, knowledge becomes part of the modern malaise: the motivating interest behind it is often suspect, and it is characterized by an expanding interrogation, categorization, and objectification of human beings. While in most of his works Foucault demonstrates this character of the human sciences by examining specific fields (psychiatry, medicine, the penal system, sexuality, etc.), in *The Order of Things* he searches for the epistemological and archaeological grounds for this phenomenon. To facilitate his discussion, Foucault introduces the concept "episteme," by which he means the "historical a priori" of an age, the underlying structure of thought within which positive knowledge is formulated. The episteme is therefore a principle of intelligibility by virtue of which "ideas could appear, sciences be established, experiences be reflected in philosophies, [and] rationalities be formed" in a given era.[18] Foucault distinguishes between three epistemes: renaissance, classical, and modern. The latter, he argues, grapples with irreconcilable contradictions, which he demonstrates through an inquiry into three fields of knowledge: language, labor, and life.

The classical episteme, which extends roughly from Descartes to pre-Kantian thought, was characterized by the absence of a subject at the center of representations, avers Foucault.

Signification was possible because language was seen as transparent, as providing an accurate representation of the world without calling for exercises of deciphering as in the renaissance. Because of the correspondence between words and a cosmos with a pre-given order, there was no need to problematize human nature from the point of view of its epistemic-constitutive and synthetic faculties. In the taxonomic table of knowledge characteristic of the classical age, humans occupy a place without any particular distinction. "In [c]lassical thought," writes Foucault, "the personage for whom the representation exists, and who represents himself within it, recognizing himself therein as an image or reflection, he who ties together all the interlacing threads of the 'representation in the form of a picture of a table'—he is never to be found in that table himself. Before the end of the eighteenth century man did not exist. . . ."[19]

The modern episteme, in contrast, invented this new being, "man." Kantian philosophy introduced him as both an object among other objects and as a subject by virtue of which representation and knowledge are possible. Man is conceived of as finite: as an object, he is shaped by a mode of production, a linguistic system, or his place on the temporal-evolutionary scale; as a subject, he is unable to penetrate into "things in themselves." But Kant separated the two classes of finitude, and, moreover, posited finite subjectivity as a foundation for the forming of true representations of the world of objects and of man as part of it. This move, argues Foucault, established three intrinsic sets of doubles within modern thought.

(A) *The Empirical and the Transcendental*: As empirical beings, humans find themselves immersed in and subjected to the laws and mechanisms of natural and social-historical

realties. These realities define and shape humans, or in Foucault's words, establish "finite positivities." From this perspective, man is seen as "governed by labor, life, and language, his concrete existence finds its determination in them; it is possible to have access to him only through his words, his organism, the objects he makes." [20] Man's specific modes of existence can thus be captured by establishing sciences such as philology, biology, and economics. Kantian epistemology, however, also presented man as being comprised of some "fundamental" nature. The transcendental subject is seen as providing the epistemic conditions that render all knowledge of experience possible. This new role of the subject is explained by admitting that, while man's cognition must be finite and within the limits of space, time, and categories such as causality and substance, the universal and timeless quality of this *a priori*, transcendental framework guarantees the objectivity and communicability of knowledge. Kant viewed the prescribing cognitive apparatus as empty in itself, but as constitutive of sense-data, which it synthesizes to generate meaningful information about the phenomenal world.

As a corollary to the founding act of epistemic finitude, however, modern thought sought to base the empirical sciences that study man upon some "fundamental" features of his own finitude.

> The mode of being of life, and even that which determines the fact that life cannot exist without prescribing its forms for me, are given to me, fundamentally, by my body; the mode of being of production, the weight of its determinations upon my existence, are given to me by my desire; and the mode of being of language, the whole backwash of history to which words lend their glow at the instant they are pronounced . . . are given to me only along the slender chain of my speaking thought.[21]

In the modern episteme, then, knowledge about man is established by formulating

essentialist presuppositions about the body and its mechanisms, speech and its underlying structure, desire, and needs. (For example, since Ricardo, modern economics does not explain production in terms of fluctuation in the exchange value of commodities--as did the analysis of wealth during the classical period--but on the grounds of lack and scarcity, both present and past, that characterizes the human experience. Today, rational choice theory attempts to explain economic and social phenomena by presupposing the fundamentals of human self-interest and rationality.) Modern thought strives to divide the finite fundamental from the finite positivities, realizing that the former is its only basis for comprehending the fluctuations of the latter. "[O]ur culture," writes Foucault, "crossed the threshold beyond which we recognize our modernity when finitude was conceived in an interminable cross-reference with itself."[22]

According to Foucault, however, the marriage of the empirical and the transcendental aspects of man establishes a paradoxical and unstable arrangement, since man becomes "an enslaved sovereign, [an] observed spectator."[23] How can man--who is thoroughly shaped by a national language, by the needs his economic system breeds, by his evolutionary stage--be in possession of an insulated and fixed cognitive apparatus (and other fundamentals)? The transcendental is constantly under the threat of being determined by unavoidable modifications in natural and historical empirical realities, and these realities (and man as part of them), in turn, of being misrepresented and wrongly analyzed under the bias of a conditioned cognitive structure. Because of this reciprocal relation, modern thought is characterized by an oscillation between the fundamental and the positivities, by an intrinsic and compulsive search for defining the identity and difference between them, and by attempts to reduce the empirical to the transcendental--

and *vice versa*. In an effort to resolve these tensions, post-Enlightenment philosophy approached man empirically through an exploration of his observed characteristics (e.g., Comte's positivism) or through eschatology, where the subject is explained through true philosophical discourse and method (e.g., Marx's historical materialism).

(B) *Cogito and the Unthought*: Thought in the modern episteme, writes Foucault, discovers "both in itself and outside itself . . . an element of darkness, an apparently inert density in which it is embedded, an unthought which it contains entirely, yet in which it is also caught."[24] Since Descartes, the possibility of reflection is dependent upon the existence of a pure *cogito* or consciousness, one able to posit itself unconditionally against objectified social and natural surroundings. But the modern *cogito* must differ from the Cartesian one: now man recognizes that he may represent the world only because he possesses a body, a language, desires and needs—in short, because he is submerged in things whose origins and workings elude him. This spawns a sense of insecurity in the autonomy of *cogito*. Man recognizes, for example, that he is able to represent the world only because he is endowed from the outset with a language, but he is never certain how the words he employs affect his reflection, even his ability to conceptualize the notion of *cogito* itself; he is forced, therefore, into endless objectifications of language, to an effort to retrieve the "in itself" and transform it to "for itself." As Rabinow and Dreyfus observe, the dilemma is that "the background of taken-for-granted commitments and practices, precisely because it is unthought, makes thought and action possible, but it also puts their source and meaning out of our control."[25] Foucault sees Freud's uncovering of the unconscious and the transcendental reductionism of Husserl's phenomenology as

exemplifying the dichotomized motility of modern reflection on the nature of consciousness.

(C) *The Retreat and the Return of the Origin.* As an empirical being, man must understand himself as emerging through a chain of causes and within a time that is homogenous in nature, devoid of any distinctive "events." In this respect, he cannot have a fundamental, since his use of language, the nature of his needs, and the very evolution of his body only reveal a *gradual formation.* Nor, moreover, can his cognitive apparatus be free from this piecemeal generation. The multiplicity of developments does not disclose a moment at which man can witness his "birth," but rather deprives him of any discernible beginnings. The origin of man "is that which introduces into his experience contents and forms older than him, which he cannot master; it is that which, by binding him to multiple, intersecting, often mutually irreducible chronologies, scatters him through time . . . ."[26]

In contrast to this endless retreat of his birth, however, man must also constantly renew the notion of an origin. The very construction of his history as an homogenous, temporal order to be understood within the framework of causality is possible only because there is already a subject founding and enabling this construction; ironically, the human subject as a distinct origin of cognition must be presupposed in order to reveal to the same subject that he has no clear origins and foundations. Thus the paradoxical task of modern thought is that of "contesting the origin of things, but of contesting it in order to give it a foundation by rediscovering the mode upon which the possibility of time is constituted—

that origin without origin or beginning, on the basis of which everything is able to come into being."[27] The preoccupation with the origin again steers modern thought into two opposing directions: while historicists such as Hegel, Marx, and Spengler see this return as involving a promised wholeness and plenitude, others such as Hölderlin, Nietzsche, and especially Heidegger view it as leading to an escape from pre-given embeddedness and therefore to a void, a meaningless existence, an encounter with nihilistic thought.

The anthropocentric foundation of the modern episteme and the immanent contradictions it generates propels modern thought to augment its will for knowledge in new and myriad directions. As cognitive psychology strives to fathom man's generic capabilities for representation, social sciences such as sociology, political science, and cultural studies seek to unveil the social rules and cultural symbols by which man tacitly represents his environment and that enable him to function in it. None of these sciences, contends Foucault, has been able to develop a convincing methodology and conceptual system of its own: each remains, in fact, dependent on models of the natural sciences (especially biology) as well as of economics and philology. This methodological confusion and dependency only deepens their profusion. Moreover, the mistrust in the purity and autonomy of cogito calls for repeated efforts to retrieve the unthought, as psychoanalysis does, and the recovery of the origin engenders studies that extends from ethnology to evolutionary theories.

The proliferative trend that the modern epistemic arrangement introduces into the human sciences also effects other domains of knowledge that are central for Foucault, although he never makes the connection explicit. Once representations of the world have been seen

as dependent on man's reason alone, unreason becomes something deeply threatening that needs to be closely examined and eliminated, if possible; once man's proper functioning in the social environment has been conceived of in terms of his ability to unconsciously represent for himself the norms and rules of society, it became necessary to examine and correct those who, like the delinquent, failed to abide by such representations; and once the impact of the body on the transcendental subject has been seen as suspect, it became imperative to understand how the body's dark mechanisms, especially its sexuality, could influence the being and consciousness of man. Thus, while epistemic events cannot by themselves explain the developments in the history of madness, criminality, and sexuality, they fostered changes that occurred at the genealogical level.

III.   *Language as a Battlefield: Discourse and Transgression*

The global effect of the modern episteme, then, is the ubiquity of the will to knowledge and truth, a will that "daily grows in strength, in depth, and implacability."[28] The hold of this will is especially manifested in the modifications of our language: it becomes saturated with a scientific discourse that objectifies the world and relates to things through true and false statements, that makes the norm (with the aid of statistics) into a governing principle, that invents endless categories to designate human beings and fix their identities. But if, on the one hand, language in modernity becomes a medium through which human experience and self-understanding are shaped and confined, then on the other, language (or writing, *écriture*) also becomes the domain through which the modern

self asserts its freedom and expands its existential horizons.[29] Apollonian discourse and dionysian literature pull language in opposite directions, both intensifying their hold upon it simultaneously.[30] The dualistic nature of our language and our preoccupation with words in general are in Foucault's view a unique characteristic of the modern episteme.

For the classical episteme, as noted above, language was a transparent medium, the assumption being that words correspond to what they signify in an unproblematic fashion; representation, then, "was a matter of dividing nature up by means of a constant table of identities and differences for which language provided a primary, approximative and rectifiable *grid*."[31] The vision of harmony induced by a preexisting Divine order extends to the natural association of signified and signifier, and thus "language was a form of knowing and knowing was automatically discourse."[32] According to Foucault, the breakdown of this declared self-evident association in the late eighteenth century prompted the collapse of the classical episteme as a whole. "The threshold between classicism and modernity . . . had been definitely crossed when words stopped to intersect with representations and to provide a spontaneous grid for the knowledge of things."[33]

In the wake of this breakdown, language came to be seen as an autonomous and potent domain; it began to "acquire its own particular density, to deploy a history and objectivity, and laws of its own."[34] In modernity, language has an ambiguous position: if it is recognized as the form through which any thought must express itself, it is also distrusted for molding and distorting not only our knowledge, but also our speech, opinions, thoughts—in short, our identities.

> Having become a dense and consistent historical reality, language forms the locus of tradition, of the unspoken habits of thought, of what lies hidden in people's minds; it accumulates an ineluctable memory which does not even know itself as memory. Expressing their thought in works of which they are not the masters, enclosing them in verbal forms whose historical dimensions they are unaware of, *men believe that their speech is their servant and do not realize that they are submitting themselves to its demands* [my emphasis].[35]

Since the nineteenth century, language as a time-bounded reality has become the principal terrain of entrapment, according to Foucault. As moderns, we live with the consciousness that "we are already, before the very least of our words, governed and paralyzed by language"[36]; thought is conditioned by the *a priori* and inescapable grammatical structure of language, its national and idiomatic characteristics, its historical vicissitudes, its multiple meanings, ambiguities, and context-dependent quality. Language is seen as one of the historico-empirical spheres in which man is enmeshed, and as posing to him a very profound challenge since only by employing words may he acquire knowledge about the world and himself. The sense of entrapment within language could have arisen, however, only because modern philosophy depicted man as a sovereign, transcendental subject, and as an independent moral agent by virtue of his free will and consciousness. Both of these claims may be questioned once we recognize the possible imprints of language: can it be, contra Kant, that our notions of time, space, and causality are conditioned by the language we employ? Or that the universality and law-like inclinations of Western moral theories are related to the abstractness that has inflicted our words? It is the singular combination of visions of radical self-determination with historically conditioned, contingent language that propels the contemporary sense of entrapment.

168

Once man understands himself as being mired in language, his sense of finitude and of groundless existence is accentuated. As Rajchman suggests, Foucault views modernity as an age where "[a]ll scientific, aesthetic, and moral problems are reduced to problems of language, and languages have no warrant of foundation beyond themselves."[37] Yet modern thought has been unwilling to accept the arbitrary boundaries imposed by a language unfettered by reality; it is seeking, therefore, "to destroy syntax, to shatter tyrannical modes of speech, [and] to turn words around in order to perceive all that is being said through them and despite them."[38] More specifically, Foucault argues, the assay to overcome the obstacles that language poses to knowledge has taken two paths.

First, positivists like Russell sought to purge language of all unique, accidental, and imprecise elements and thus to achieve the formalization of language. Boole and others had an even more ambitious project in mind, striving to develop a symbolic logic that would dispense with everyday language altogether. The goal of both of these exercises was to reconstruct or develop a new language that reflects pre-verbal thought in its inviolate transparency. Second, writers such as Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud embraced the historical and multi-layered makeup of language. They engaged in works of exegesis, convinced that understanding the meaning buried in words would illuminate our economic, moral-cultural, and psychic realities. In general, many of our endeavors to transform our identities and regain the ability to freely define them center on examining and criticizing the words with which we relate to others and describe ourselves.

Now Foucault can be seen as sharing the post-Enlightenment trepidation at the reign of language in general and the reign of scientific discourse in particular. (From this

perspective. Foucault situates himself in the midst of the modern episteme, his indications about its coming demise notwithstanding.) Foucault's early works, argue Dreyfus and Rabinow, advance "the illusion of autonomous discourse,"[39] the archeologist's conviction that the production of knowledge and its effects on human experience should be explained by studying discourses and the rules that govern their formation rather than by the genealogical analysis of how the human sciences interact with complex sets of power struggles, political strategies, and contemporary institutions and practices. While Dreyfus and Rabinow see a radical change in Foucault's methodology during the 1970s, Allen Megill suggests that Foucault's studies of power during that time did not diminish the central role he ascribes to discourse. Often, maintains Megill, Foucault perceives powe. struggles as "taking place within discourse itself."[40] In any event, one can agree that Foucault's work (especially in books such as *The Order of Things, The Archeology of Knowledge,* and *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*) attributes a critical role in the formation of identities to the permeation of language by bodies of knowledge (*savoirs*) and, more generally, by *any socially structured, orderly speech* (which is what Foucault seems to mean by discourse). He clearly expresses his position in *L'ordre du discours.*

"There is undoubtedly in our society," writes Foucault, "a profound logophobia, a sort of dumb fear . . . of everything that could possibly be violent, discontinuous, querulous, disordered even and perilous in it, of the incessant, disorderly buzzing of discourse."[41] This fear of what can be termed centrifugal speech breeds numerous means of controlling and circumscribing discourse. To begin with, the sayable and thinkable are subject to external constraints or "rules of exclusion." The most important of these is based on the separation of true and false statements, a separation introduced by Platonism. Since then,

"the highest truth no longer resided in what discourse *was*, nor in what it *did*: it lay in what was *said*."[42] In the Western tradition, argues Foucault, words have generally been divorced from deeds, measured by the truth they contain rather than by the action and awe they demand. Foucault emphasizes that the dichotomization of discourse into true and false statements, and the will to truth that supports this dichotomy, have undergone numerous historical transformations, and have always been dependent upon institutional support. In modernity, however, discourses of knowledge have penetrated into more and more institutions, governing areas such as the formation of economic policies or the operation of the penal system. (A related rule of exclusion, present in Western discourse since the seventeenth century, is the designation of the madman's speech as either meaningless or as the Other of reason.)

In addition to these external restrictions on discourse, there are internal ones that foster its coherence and continuity. First there is the principle of commentary, according to which some works are rated as basic, classic, and essential, and then serve as the foundation for endless criticism and interpretation. This introduces a hierarchy into discourse and leads to the formation of tradition. Commentary thus "limit[s] the hazards of discourse through the action of an *identity* taking the form of *repetition* and *sameness*"; a second principle, authorship, "limits this same chance element through the action of an *identity* whose form is that of *individuality* and the *I*."[43] The idea of the author, argues Foucault, fabricates a sense of unity among works, of a common purpose and consciousness behind them, and of an essential relation between them and the individual's biography, which reflects the context of his or her time. A third internal factor is the segmentation into disciplines. Scientific propositions are meaningful--and can be assigned

a true or false status--only if they relate to a defined set of objects, employ acceptable methods, embrace a certain theoretical field. "Disciplines," writes Foucault, "constitute a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits through the action of an identity taking the form of a permanent reactivation of the rules."[44]

Discourse fictionalizes order and regularity; we should therefore conceive of it "as a violence that we do to things, or at all events, as a practice we impose upon them."[45] Unable or unwilling to cope with the open and chaotic elements in our experience, we neutralize discourse, trying to "avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality."[46] The logic of discourse, therefore, has something in common with the logic behind both the disciplining, bureaucratic machine and the sociability-fostering super-ego: it posits the singularity of phenomena as a dangerous disruption, advancing predictability as the main tenet of its creed. According to Foucault, the orderliness, containment, and hence the imposed violence of discourse have intensified in modernity. Since our thought lacks any foundation--beyond language itself--upon which to make judgments, we must circumscribe our language and extend the applicability of scientific discourse. For example, "[i]t is as though the very words of the law had no authority in our society, except insofar as they are derived from true discourse."[47] This apollonialization of discourse and thought, however, is precisely what is eschewed by modernist art and the new, transgressive counter-discourse: literature.

Foucault's extensive writings on literature during the sixties should be seen in the context

of the *nouvelle critique* of Barthes and the *Tel Quel* journal. This intellectual milieu

followed Robbe-Grillet's anti-humanism, emphasized the liberating role of avant-garde

literature, and saw modernist writings (and art) as constituting an autonomous sphere

where it engages in self-reflective activity. Foucault shared these beliefs, and commented

on some of the writers whose works interested the *nouvelle critique*: Flaubert, Roussel,

Artaud, Blanchot, Klossowski, Bataille, and others. His main contribution to literary

theory, however, is located not so much in these individual essays (or book, in the case

of Roussel) as in his ability to place the problematic of contemporary literature in the

context of the modern episteme.

Modern literature, argues Foucault, does not escape the consciousness of finitude that is

immanent to post-Enlightenment thought. Yet whereas for the human sciences finitude

demarcates the limits of human experience and knowledge, for literature finitude must be

explored--and violated. Literature dwells "in that region where death prowls, where

thought is extinguished, where the promise of the origin interminably recedes."[48] The

quest of avant-garde writings is to leap beyond the confines of representation--to probe

into cruelty and excess, the loss of boundaries and intermingling between self and other,

the upset of narrativity and coherence, angst and uncanniness, unconscious images and

desires, sexuality and extinction--it is about limit experiences.[49] During the classical

period, literature was subordinated to the representative task of language; it therefore

enhanced the sense of an orderly and pleasant world governed by universal moral and

aesthetic values. Modern literature, however, "becomes detached from all the values that were able to keep it in general circulation during the classical age (taste, pleasure, naturalness, truth), and creates within its own space everything that will ensure a lucid denial of them (the scandalous, the ugly, the impossible)."[50]

Finitude and the transgressive ethos of contemporary literature, then, are fundamentally interrelated, in Foucault's view. Finitude means that whatever limits are imposed on human beings--limits primarily delineated by language--they cannot be justified by a natural, eternally ordered world. As a consequence, these boundaries are always suspect, blurred, and open to question by writing. The death of God established a new understanding that "nothing may again announce the exteriority of being,"[51] since nothing that is designated stands outside and against us; our experience thus becomes both "interior" and undefinable, calling for bounds beyond its arbitrary circumscription. "[T]oward what," asks Foucault, "is transgression unleashed in its movement of pure violence, if not that which imprisons it, toward the limit and those elements it contains?"[52] Yet transgression is purely negative: "no content can bind it, since, by definition, no limit can possibly restrict it."[53] Transgression is a movement that breaks existing forms; it does not affirm new ones. Needless to say, the limit--of experience, of reason, of identity--cannot be eliminated, and thus contestation has the character of a repeated, infinite, and non-totalizing leaps. These leaps, Foucault seems to argue, bring about a dual revelation: on the one hand, they unveil uncharted terrains of thought and life; on the other, they often discover that what resides beyond the limit is not an Other separated by an unbridgeable Difference, but is rather Identity and the Same (e.g., the false gulf between madness and reason).

Now since the perimeter of finitude is principally linguistic, modernist literature is propelled to ponder the question of language or, more specifically, it *reflects upon itself* as a constitutive part of language. Free from the classical task of representing the world, the word become its own subject. Literature thus appears as "a silent, cautious deposition of the word upon the whiteness of a piece of paper, where it can possess neither sound nor interlocutor, where it has nothing to say but itself, nothing to do but shine in the brightness of its being."[54] This new insulation of the word from the world, however, goes hand in hand with the work being woven into a matrix of words and works that preceded it: writing involves allusion to other texts, references to the traditions they establish, contemplation of the medium and its various forms--and a questioning of the meaning of writing itself. This self-referential activity forms the "library" of modernist literature, of which Flaubert is the founder, avers Foucault. In writing *The Temptation*, Flaubert "produced the first literary work whose exclusive domain is that of books." Following him, "Mallarme is able to write *Le Livre* and modern literature is activated--Joyce, Roussel, Kafka, Pound, Borges. The library is on fire."[55]

As the works of this library are being liberated from the task of realistically representing their times, they also rebut the fiction of the "author" and the presupposition of a common purpose and meaning behind an oeuvre. According to Foucault, a text is singular and independent, referring to other texts in the library rather than to texts by the same author; writing is about the beings and possibilities of words, not about the life of the author, who remains external and secondary. This propensity of modernist literature to detach the work from the author is correlated by the dissolution of the narrator *within* the work. Sade's work, for example, "does not have an absolute subject," and thus "never discovers

the one who ultimately speaks."[56] The anonymity of the narrator and the multiplication of speaking voices have major consequences, according to Foucault. Literature confronts the Kantian legacy, accelerating "the breakdown of philosophical subjectivity and its dispersion in a language that dispossesses it while multiplying it within the space created by its absence," a development which is "probably one of the fundamental structures of contemporary thought."[57] Indeed, writing is not a way to forge a self, to reflect a biography, to search for the coherence of a life story, or to acquire immortality through the preservation of one's name. Rather, "[w]here the work had the duty of creating immortality," writes Foucault, "it now attains the right to kill, to become the murderer of its author."[58] Foucault even suggests that some of those who have been most sensitive to this disintegration of the subject in writing—Hölderlin, Nietzsche, Artaud, Roussel—have internalized this predicament to an extent that forced them to succumb to madness.

This depiction of modernist literature manifests its role as a mirror image of discourse in Foucault's work during the sixties. If discourse is an attempt to establish a positive, durable knowledge about man, transgressive literature is an attempt to call into question any accepted truth, definition, norm; if discourse relates to the world through a dichotomy between true and false statements, literature seeks an aestheticization of life and valorizes *any* act and thought as long as it is rebellious, lurid, and new; if discourse introduces through commentary a hierarchy among works, the library is a matrix of references where often the text that is alluding becomes more important than the text alluded to; if discourse promotes the idea of a subject that ties the threads behind the works— emphasizing how essential the author's psychology, biography, and intentions are— literature introduces a cacophony of voices that resist reduction; if discourse regards the

speech of folly as meaningless or as an Other, literature recognizes that this speech may come from those who have grasped some of the fundamental truths of our culture; if, in sum, discourse is the centripetal mode of our language, literature is the centrifugal one.

The Order of Things ends on an optimistic note. The epistemic trap may have a gate after all: the subversiveness and self-reflection of post-Enlightenment literature may bring down the modern episteme, suggests Foucault. "[M]an," he argues, "is in the process of perishing as the being of language continues to shine ever brighter upon our horizon."[59] Yet this faith did not last for long. After the events of 1968, Foucault stops thinking in terms of a global and total change, and adopts a more overtly political stand that advances local and limited struggles. Thus during the seventies he supplanted the epistemic trap with a theory of power, advancing the doublet power-freedom instead of the doublet discourse-literature. (Discourse and the will to knowledge are still critical, but they are now studied in connection with power). As we shall see, Foucault's theory of power rebuffs the idea that a historical situation exists that can be described as "free" and purged from discontent, and neither does it recognize any sphere of life or language as immune to the effects of power. In fact, Foucault's later writings portray literature itself less as a vehicle for liberation than as a symptom of a specific configuration of power.[60] This reversal is epitomized by his change of views regarding sexuality.

In Foucault's early works, sexuality is the ultimate designation of human limits, and writing about sexuality the expression of transgressive thought par-excellence. The emergence of sexuality as definitive of our finitude is *structural*, an event "tied to the death of God and to the ontological void which his death fixed at the limit of our thought."[61] Following Bataille, Foucault asserts that in the absence of God, sexuality is the primal, natural boundary; it "marks the limit within us and designates us as a limit."[62] The scandalous language of writings about sexuality profanes our world, breaks our most sacred taboos, challenges what we believed to predate any social organization, and even uncovers what lies at the bottom of a mind we thought is a pure consciousness. As the sexual conversation proliferates, it brings about a new type of being. "Sexuality," writes Foucault "is only decisive for our culture as spoken, and to the degree that it is spoken." And since we are compelled to speak about it incessantly, its appearance as a "fundamental problem marks the transformation of a philosophy of man as worker to a philosophy based on a being who speaks."[63] In other words, for a modern self who transcends and transfigures itself through language, sexuality is a critical feature of identity and existence.

In *La Volenté de Savoir* Foucault turns this position on its head. The ingredients remain the same: modernity, language, sexuality, and the formation of the self are still integrally related, but now instead of being a transgressive/liberating act, the infusion of our speech with sexuality is a manifestation of a power at work. Let us examine this reversal.

According to Foucault's new view, the modern preoccupation with sex originates in pastoral practices of the seventeenth century, and even more so with the eighteenth-century perception of the human body as a biological entity bearing insurmountable importance for the state. In the competition among European nation-states, the well-being and vigor of the social body were vital. The state therefore had to encourage the study and regulation of health and disease, mortality rates and life expectancy, diets from infancy to adulthood, birth rates and hygiene. "Western man," writes Foucault, "was gradually learning what it meant to. . . have a body, conditions of existence, probabilities of life, and individual and collective welfare, forces that could be modified, and a space in which they could be distributed in an optimal manner."[64] The state became an administrator of living beings, manipulating the population as a whole and the life of each individual separately in an attempt to match reproduction to the needs of production or warfare. Thenceforth, the power and vigor of the state demanded oversighting its people as complex biological creatures--not simply as legal entities.

For this politics, that Foucault calls "bio-power," sex obviously became a major object of analysis. Sex was no longer "only a matter of sensation and pleasure, of law and taboo, but also of *truth and falsehood*" [my emphasis]. [65] Particularly during the early nineteenth century, the discourse on sex spread into diverse disciplines: demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, criminology, and pedagogy. In each of these fields, argues Foucault, human sexual behavior has been interrogated and made into an object upon which propositions can be constructed. New categories and names have been invented, and then portrayed as capturing some essential truth about the character, moral worth, appearance, and mental abilities of a person. Each new category--the hysteric or

frigid woman, the hyper-masturbating child, the pervert—has become in its time a human type. Indeed, if in the preceding centuries "the sodomite had been a temporary aberration," with the discourses on sexuality the homosexual has been turned into "a species."[66]

The elaboration of these discourses or bodies of knowledge has been dependent upon the appropriation of the confessional practice from its religious context by the clinic, school, hospital, or home. "The transformation of sex into discourse, . . . the dissemination and reinforcement of heterogeneous sexualities," elucidates Foucault, "are perhaps two elements of the same deployment: they are linked together with the help of the central element of a confession that compels individuals to articulate their sexual peculiarity—no matter how extreme."[67] The confession, of course, does not leave a person neutral: it demands a certain relation to oneself; an introspection and monitoring of behavior and thought; a fostering of dependence upon an expert who interprets the truth within oneself; an acceptance of the underlying assumptions and terminology of the discourse—even a deepening and magnification of the very notion of interiority. Since the Romantic period, we see this interiority as the domain most secure from power, as the one containing the gist of our singularity and bounded identity. It is a vast container of individual feelings, images, memories, and thoughts, the truthful expression and formation of which is vital for authenticity and freedom. Foucault finds these convictions—and the hermeneutical exercises they call for—ironic, especially as they manifest themselves in the confessional disposition of the modern self.

> The obligation to confess . . . is so deeply ingrained in us, that we no
> longer perceive it as the effect of a power that constrains us; on the

> contrary, it seems to us that truth "demands" only to surface . . . Confession frees, but power reduces one to silence; truth does not belong to the order of power, but shares an original affinity with freedom.[68]

Power, it seems, *can even produce our notion of freedom itself*, rendering the self-constitution of the subject inseparable from its formation by external, disciplinary forces. (As we shall see, this Foucauldian argument makes the distinction between genuine freedom and a produced one a rather baffling project.) The possibility of false notions of freedom shades new light on the meaning of sexual literature since the late eighteenth century. Rather than epitomizing defiance, these writings could be seen as exemplifying the successful masking of power; their minute recollection and confession of sexual acts and phantasies is not a demonstration of courage, but of a certain banality. Sade and the anonymous Englishman who diligently described his sexual adventures in *My Secret Life*, illustrate the operation of power in our subjectification, the latter author being only "the most direct and in a way the most naive representative of a plurisecular injunction to talk about sex."[69] But the idea that sex contains the secret of our liberty misled not only these writers, in Foucault's view, but also more contemporary theorists such as Reich and Marcuse, who advanced the "repressive hypothesis" associating the ills inflicted by capitalism and bourgeois life with repressed sexuality.

In Foucault's writings during the 1970s, then, literature is no longer the force that counters discourse, but a byproduct of both discourse and bio-power; and the marriage between language and sexuality breeds not transgression but covert submission. These transformations in Foucault's position reveal something vital not only to these specific issues, but also to his thought as a whole: They demonstrate that a theory of entrapment

that lacks a subject or presuppositions about the self must adopt an ethos of suspicion, that it can find no point of rest, since any time it finds an anchor from which to transgress or resist an extant order, it ends up questioning this anchor itself. This dynamic is immanent in Foucault's notions of power and freedom, to which I now turn.

V.   *Power and Freedom*

"I believe," writes Foucault, "one's point of reference should not be to the great model of language (*langue*) and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of war rather than that of language: relations of power, not relations of meaning."[70] This attack on the centrality of language in social critique is aimed at semeiotics, a; well as at Foucault's own early thought. Modernist literature, he now seems to claim, is impotent as a vehicle for transformation, and discourses, moreover, do not originate out of epistemic structures but because of ever-changing, undetermined power struggles. By envisioning such a battle, Foucault radicalizes in important respects the terms through which entrapment theorists describe the relation between the self and its social environment. Before I examine this radicalization, however, a brief explication of his concepts of power and freedom is called for.

Foucault views power in operative terms, defining it as "a way in which certain actions modify others," or as a "total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions."[71] Power is exercised by individuals and groups upon others, or, more precisely,

upon their potential endeavors; it does not aspire to subdue or destroy individuals (which would be pure violence), but to govern their conduct and their relationship to themselves by structuring "the possible field of action."[72] This structuring enables as it limits, inciting certain outcomes while eliminating the option of others. To achieve its specific goals, power may have to narrow the field of possibilities to a minimum, yet it must leave a certain element of choice in order to be effective. Power is "exercised only over free subjects and only insofar as they are free,"[73] since only then does the individual have the necessary conditions to govern herself. But this space for action may also breed resistance, and, in point of fact, "faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible invention may open up."[74]

For Foucault, then, ontological or metaphysical inquiries into the nature of power are misguided. "[S]omething called Power," he writes, "with or without a capital letter, which is assumed to exist universally in a concentrated or a diffused form, does not exist. Power exists only when it is put into action . . . ."[75] In Foucault's nominalist and descriptive approach, power cannot be a substance or a commodity such as wealth, knowledge, or influence, although it may be related to these in various ways. Power is operative within a field of relations; it is not a resource to be accumulated in virtue of these relations. Foucault is also critical, therefore, of the liberal depiction of power as something that can be legitimately "transferred" from the governed to the governor. This view, which is based on the monarchical model, portrays power as centered in the hands of a ruler; the danger, accordingly, is that power is susceptible to overflows, to crossing the agreed upon boundaries for its use by infringing upon the rights of citizens and oppressing them. Thus not only are liberals guilty of reifying power, but also of misrepresenting it as negative

in nature, argues Foucault. "[P]ower produces: it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production,"[76] writes Foucault.

Foucault's critique of liberal notions of freedom follows a parallel line. For liberals of the Lockeian tradition, freedom is something to be possessed by constructing a cluster of rights around a private sphere; freedom, in other words, can be understood as a "state." In contrast, for Foucault freedom (similarly to power) exists only in action: "liberty is a practice;"[77] it should be understood in terms of verbs, not nouns, in the plural and not in the singular. "Rather than speaking of an essential freedom, it would be better to speak of an 'agonism'. . . less face-to-face confrontation [between the individual and power] which paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation."[78] Agonism rather than possession: a person is free only to the extent that she unveils, questions, and refuses a certain configuration of power, and to the extent that she invents, experiments, and elaborates an alternative and self-determined mode of life and selfhood. This elaboration, however, does not presuppose—as do Kantian, Hegelian, and Marxian theories—a pregiven human nature or end that needs to be revealed and nourished. Rather than thinking in terms of a final "liberation," argues Foucault, we should see the construction of subjectivity as an ongoing and open project.[79] As Rajchman eloquently puts it, Foucault understands freedom as an "experience of fragility of a kind of identification taken for granted. Who we are would not be the image or source of this freedom, but just what is constantly freed or opened to question by it."[80]

In conceptualizing this notion of freedom, Foucault continues to employ an opposition between dionysian and apollonian elements, albeit with an important change. If power, similarly to discourse, is characterized by the predictable cast it violently imposes upon things, freedom is transgression-like, questioning the forms forced by power and maintaining a certain dynamism in the constitution of identities. Even before he invoked the concept of freedom directly, Foucault spoke of "something in the social body" that opposes power, a "plebeian quality or aspect" that can be seen as "a centrifugal movement, an inverse energy, a discharge."[81] In contrast to the opposition between literature and discourse, however, the one between freedom and power is perpetual, although it may take different shapes. Freedom thus becomes the foundation of the Foucauldian critique of power in general, and of its modern forms in particular: Foucault denounces modernity for its denial of one's capacity to practice freedom and shape one's own identity. In this respect, freedom has in Foucault's thought an equivalent role to that of the desire for meaning in Weber's, or to that of instinctual satisfaction in Freud's. (Foucault would not say, however, that we have a basic, natural *need* for freedom.)[82] We have seen how these two authors present their elastic presuppositions about the self in such a way that eliminates the possibility of programmatic politics. Similarly, Foucault's quest for more individual distinctiveness and autonomy in self-formation guides his critique, but does not translate into a comprehensive political vision: it remains a critical principle, not a regulative one. Bearing this principle in mind could help us clarify why Foucault sees modern power as particularly insidious.

VI.   *The Web of Power*

"Power," writes Foucault, "is tolerable only on condition that it masks a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms."[83] The normalizing forms of power successfully traverse modern society because they remain invisible and unconscious. Foucault demonstrates these characteristics of power in *Discipline and Punish*, where he examines its disciplinary/objectifying aspects and contrasts it with the monarchical modality of power. If the latter was symbolized by the king's body and required recurring public spectacles to manifest his might, disciplinary power deepens its infiltration and increases its efficiency the more it succeeds in establishing a machine of surveillance wherein the cogs are constantly perceivable, while the corporeality of power is reduced to an instrumental fiction. Thus Bentham's Panopticon, which serves Foucault as a metaphor for contemporary forms of social organization, "is a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad: in the peripheric ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen."[84] "Visibility" is therefore "a trap"[85]--and a silent one, too.

Instead of attracting attention to its own actuality, modern power pushes a person back on himself. The "perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary . . . the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers."[86] Power is optimized when the gaze, the words, and the norms of the other--whether he is a warden, psychiatrist, therapist, or teacher--are internalized and integrated into one's identity. As long as power successfully individualizes and separates human

beings, this process can be presented as one of self-formation rather than of imposition; and as long as it classifies them within a matrix of categories and sub-categories, it fabricates a sense of difference and uniqueness while a global uniformity of identities progressively reigns.

Given this intangible and deceiving nature of power, Foucault comes to valorize philosophy and critical thought, regarding them as vital for the unmasking of power and the practice of freedom. "[P]hilosophy is precisely the challenging of all phenomena of domination at whatever level or under whatever form they present themselves," Foucault writes.[87] Since "man is a thinking being,"[88] he is able to expose as historically conditioned the categories with which we describe ourselves and the norms that govern our lives. Thus the kind of philosophy Foucault has in mind is Nietzschean and skeptical: it strives to do away with the notion of Truth. As we have seen above, the will to truth already appears as endemic to modern society in Foucault's early writings; now, however, its sources are presented in light of their close affinity with quests for domination. Power relations

> cannot by themselves be established, consolidated, nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation, and functioning of discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operate through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth.[89]

As Foucault has convincingly shown throughout his work, new institutions and practices—such as the asylum, the hospital, the prison, or the plurisecular confession—provide the necessary setting for observation, documentation, and experimentation, and hence for the

accumulation of bodies of knowledge such as psychiatry, clinical medicine, criminology, and psychoanalysis. These bodies of knowledge, in turn, shoulder the necessary justification and organizing principles for the relevant institution or practices. The emergence of social sciences such as demography, statistics, and public health studies is also intertwined with the regulative imperatives of bio-power. In general, Foucault's point is that the disciplines of the human sciences require disciplining, subjectifying, and administrative-supervising techniques, and that this underlying context is constitutive of these sciences. Not only are the human sciences therefore methodologically flawed, as *The Order of Things* argued, but they are imbued with a pursuit of domination.

Foucault is thus skeptical of views such as Habermas's in *Knowledge and Human Interest*, which see the human sciences as serving the interests of society and as potentially emancipatory.[90] In contrast, Foucault questions our ability to oversee the production of knowledge and its uses, presenting it as yet another sphere of modern life—similar to the market, bureaucracy, sexual morality—that is out of collective control. Rather than advancing enlightenment or transparent communication, this production brings about the subjection of modern selves: it fosters the fib of inherent truths that are definitive of identities, objectifies and helps utilize bodies, and increasingly enshrines the regulation of society in the hands of experts, who are themselves caught in the institutional matrix they inhabit. Confronting power is an intricate project, since we should not enlist the aid of science in criticizing present social conditions, certainly not in the name of a repressed human nature or impaired psyche; science, moreover, should not be our instrument for gauging the probable consequences of changes we may introduce into our educational system, health and mental health practices, penitentiary

institutions, etc. Exercising our freedom means combating the entrenched role of the human sciences in our culture and the ways of thought they have ingrained. "It is not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the *power of truth* from the forms of hegemony, social, economic, and cultural, within which it operates at the present time" [my emphasis].[91]

This struggle against the hegemonic forms of power/knowledge in modern society is an endless one: Foucault rejects as illusory the notion of a situation that—both from vertical and horizontal perspectives—is struggle-free. From the horizontal, spatial point of view, Foucault understands power as intrinsic to any type of human relation. "Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere," writes Foucault.[92] His early assertion that, with the death of God, man's experience is necessarily interior is now displaced with the presentation of the individual as enmeshed within a web of power that has no exterior; instead of discontinuous instances and circumscribed domains in which power is exercised we should think of it as "capillary," as involving a "micro-physics" that pertains even to minute details in everyday life. In postulating such a ubiquity of power, Foucault animates the social universe, depicting it as swarmed with constantly operative, agile forces. Any passivity should be eliminated in understanding this universe: an individual is not simply shaped—as if she were an after effect—through her "circumstances" in a benign or detrimental fashion; rather, she is subject to deliberate campaigns that strive to overcome her resistance. This characterization of the relation between the self and its surroundings leaves little credence for notions such as communitarian "shared understandings," Habermasian "ideal speech

situations," or even liberal *modus vivendi.*

From a vertical, temporal point of view, Foucault's theory does not contain a future or past state in which the operation of power could be or could have been arrested; he posits neither a time of a primal horde and blissful narcissism nor Weber's dim hope for a charismatic leader who could change the course of history. While even his own early theory allowed for a total metamorphosis because of the discontinuities among epistemes, Foucault now sees progress (in the sense of a coherent whole) as a mirage: we may dismantle some contemporary practices, replace hegemonic discourses with subjugated ones, even exercise our freedom in aesthetic transfiguration--but the fact remains that one snare will only be displaced by another, that no future situation exists in which the mutual warfare could be dissolved. In other words, while Foucault is an apostle of a radically transformed society (as Megill puts it, in his work "the present as such is brought under attack"),[93] he also mitigates the aspirations associated with such a transformation by presenting the entrapment within a condition of mutual warfare as an ahistorical and trans-spatial constant.

It is impossible to transcend power, furthermore, not only because of its "everywhereness," but also because of its centerless and disconnected nature. Foucault insists that while certain affinities may exist among apparatuses *(dispositifs)*, they should be seen as emerging and functioning independently, without a coherent plan or core behind them. Foucault warns us that there are no "headquarters that preside over its [power's] rationality; neither the caste which governs, nor the groups which control the state apparatus, nor those who make the most important economic decisions . . . ."[94]

Power does not call for a deductive methodology that presupposes a tangible nucleus, an omnipotent group or individual. Instead, we should conduct "an ascending analysis of power, starting, that is, from its infinitesimal mechanisms, which each have their own history, their own trajectory, their own techniques, and tactics. . ."[95] Foucault concedes that there are "global strategies" of power, and that certain institutions and classes--especially the state and the bourgeoisie--are capable of colonializing and utilizing the micro-exercises of power for their own advantage. Yet the rationality and effects of power in one apparatus do not necessarily correspond to those of another, and the defeat of one (or of the global strategy itself) would not loosen the grip of the others. Agonism demands the acceptance of this fragmentary nature of power, as well as the lack of easy, nameable targets.

Instead of such targets, Foucault calls us to accept the anonymity of power, its being "both intentional and non-subjective."[96] At the operational level, the "machinery" of power is housed by persons who act consciously and intentionally. Yet the advantage of the machinery is that it dictates the rules, techniques, rationale, and objectives of power without regard to autonomous subjectivities and individualities. As Foucault dramatically demonstrates in his discussion of the Panopticon, the architectonic structure itself prescribes the functions and conduct each person would perform. But the anonymity of power also pertains to its origins, especially at the micro-level: while we can isolate certain individuals and groups (e.g., Pinel, Bentham, La Salle, Quakers) as those who invented certain institutions and techniques of power, this identification does not explain why the latter have mushroomed within the whole social body. Moreover, Foucault follows Mandeville, Smith, Kant, Marx, Freud, and Weber in depicting the extant social

order as a fruition of (in his case, injurious) unintended consequences, so that even if a master mind were behind the introduction of power, it would have been pointless to study this mind's intentions. (For example, the police of the seventeenth century may have wanted to strengthen the monarchy, but by developing techniques for controlling the population they established a new matrix of power that made the monarch anachronistic and superfluous; modern prisons were intended to reform the criminal, but instead they perpetuate criminal behavior.) We must relinquish all remnants of a God-based thinking: our social world is completely fathomable in terms of its working logic, but there is no agent behind it, just a series of more or less contingent events in whose aftermaths we are mired. (The realization that its world lacks explication in terms of human purpose and will establishes a challenge for the modern self, since it can be certain neither about the efficacy of its own acts of resistance, nor that these acts would not generate an even more detrimental social universe, especially as it moves from a negative critique to a positive affirmation of alternatives.)

But perhaps by insisting upon the anonymity of power Foucault seeks to convey another idea: that power is in me as well as in you, that it is internal as well as external, that I am responsible for its operation as well as you are. One can say that Foucault is both a Rousseauist and the ultimate foe to the Rousseauist dream: both theorists depict a horizontal society where each member is simultaneously dominating and being dominated; yet whereas for Rousseau this predicament is the only hope for true freedom, for Foucault it breeds unprecedented enslavement. "We are much less Greeks than we believe. We are neither in the amphitheater, nor on the stage, but in the Panoptic machine, invested by its effects of power, which we bring to ourselves since we are part of its mechanism."[97] To

annihilate this self-generated machine, we will have to counteract external forces and to call into question some of our deepest emotions, bodily movements, beliefs, motivations, habits of thought. Practicing our freedom would demand a struggle within a landscape where the lines between the external and the internal are continuously blurred; it would demand erecting walls that have long crumbled. Before we conclude this discussion by examining how Foucault envisioned such a project, his views on discipline should be mentioned. The study of discipline is essential to Foucault's critique of modernity and has become one of his enduring legacies; it is also pertinent for this dissertation, moreover, given the uncanny and little-addressed similarities between Foucault and Weber in this matter.

VII.   *Discipline: A Comparison*

In his attempt to divulge the degree to which the modern self is fabricated and the depth of its normalization, Foucault studied the emergence of disciplinary techniques and their modes of operation. This work reveals some striking resemblances between Foucault and Weber, although Foucault's writings on discipline are far more complex and elaborate, and break new grounds in critical respects. Noting some of the similarities and differences between the two theorists will allow us to clarify the recent history of commentary on discipline. To begin with, both Weber and Foucault emphasize that the imperatives behind the inauguration of disciplined modes of conduct include needs for greater predictability, utility, efficiency, speed, and control. The disciplines regard the body and mind as clay

from which desired capabilities and aptitudes could be extracted. This objectified perspective on the human body, both agree, originated in the armies of early modern Europe, and spread from there to the whole social body: schools, hospitals, factories, prisons, bureaucracy, and more.

Discipline demands that the body shall be habituated in precise, judgment-free fashion. "The content of discipline," writes Weber, "is nothing but the consistently rationalized, methodically trained and exact execution of the received order, in which all personal criticism is unconditionally suspended and the actor is unswervingly and exclusively set for carrying out the command. In addition, this conduct under orders is uniform."[98] Similarly, Foucault notes that in discipline "it is a question not of understanding the injunction, but of perceiving the signal and reacting to it immediately according to a more or less artificial, prearranged code."[99] This pavlov-like habituation and the other features of discipline are achieved by "indefinitely progressive forms of training" and exercises, which ensure both "automatic docility"[100] and that the elements (i.e., bodies) shall be "interchangeable."[101]

In the process of disciplinary training, the human body is taken as a material that needs to be reconstituted according to specific needs. As Foucault observes, in the Classical age "the human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it."[102] For Weber this process is particularly evident in the plant, where with the "mechanization of discipline . . . the psycho-physical apparatus of man is completely adjusted to the demands of the outer world, the tools, the machines--in short to an individual 'function.' The individual is shorn of his natural rhythm as determined by the

structure of his organism; his psycho-physical apparatus is attuned to a new rhythm through a methodical specialization of separately functioning muscles . . ."[103] Foucault argues that with discipline time is redistributed and reconstituted as "an obligatory rhythm [that is] imposed from the outside"; with this imposition, "a sort of anatomo-chronological schema of behavior is defined. The act is broken down into its elements, the position of the body, the limbs, articulations is defined; to each movement are assigned a direction, an aptitude, a duration." As a consequences of this analysis of time, objects, and organs power is able to constitute "a body-weapon, body-tool, body-machine complex."[104]

The disciplines thus allow the formation of impersonal human machines that are composed of predictable individuals who function in full synchronization with each other and from which any distinctive, disruptive characteristics have been eliminated. Weber notes that in the modern army, like any bureaucratic organization, "[i]n place of individual hero-ecstasy or piety, of spirited enthusiasm or devotion to a leader as a person, of the cult of 'honor,' or the exercise of personal ability as an 'art'--discipline substitutes habituation . . ."[105] Foucault makes the same point, arguing that with discipline "the individual body becomes an element that may be placed, moved, articulated on others. Its bravery or its strength are no longer the principal variables that define it; but the place it occupies, the interval it covers, the regularity . . . The soldier is above all a fragment of mobile space, before he is courage or honor."[106]

There are, of course significant differences between Weber and Foucault. The latter observes, for example, that discipline often involves a certain ordering of space and the invention of architectonic devises that ensure control by their very structure. Foucault also

argues that if discipline imposes radical uniformity, it introduces at the same time an infinite number of categories, sub-categories, ranks, etc., that constitute a scale by which individuals are constantly differentiated and separated from one another. But Foucault's most consequential departure from Weber is in his argument that the disciplines are the birth place of the human sciences. The two meanings of the word "discipline" are in fact related: the system of supervision at the school, hospital, factory, prison, and other institutions provided convenient circumstances for observing human behavior and reactions to different conditions and requirements. This system also allowed the formation of individual files and documentation in archives, and an elaboration of statistical knowledge that is based on this stored information. The "small techniques of notation, of registration, of constituting files, of arranging facts in columns and tables that are so familiar to us now, were of decisive importance in the epistemoloical 'thaw' of the sciences of the individual."[107] Foucault sees the ritual of the examination as exemplifying the marriage between discipline and knowledge, since it is both a (compulsory) way to train and assess individuals, as well as a method of transmitting knowledge to them and gaining knowledge of them. From Foucault's perspective, then, in developing the discipline of sociology, which is based on the accumulation of data and the formation of rules of expected conduct, Weber was relying on the practices and modes of social organization that he adamantly criticized. As in many other areas of his work, Foucault encourages us to be vigilant precisely where other critics of modernity thought they were on a solid, unblemished ground.

VIII.   *Conclusion*

Despite the substantial differences between Foucault's early work on language and his late theory of power and discipline the same ethical passion sustains both: the exigency of de-normalizing our existence in its entirety, of breaking through the current fields of experience. Predictability and functionality form the creed that sustains not only our notions of citizenship, rationality, and sexuality but our language too. For Foucault, this language itself is disciplined, made hostage to the flat, centripetal forces that govern the expanding universe of information and knowledge. Loosening the grip of normalizing society would demand a new language as well as new practices, and the late Foucault was searching for both in the Greeks' and Romans' "art of existence."

According to Foucault, the ancients followed an aesthetic way of life whereby one gave a certain shape to one's conduct, valorizing moderation and self-control especially in areas such as sex, diet, emotion, hygiene, authority, and economics. This involved a continuous work on the self by itself, a deliberate setting of limits and distribution of·pleasures.[108] Through these exercises the ancients elaborated a style that was personal and singular; the self of Antiquity is a self-formed one, not a predetermined product of power. "I believe," says Foucault, "that the subject is constituted through practices of subjection, or, in a more autonomous way, through practices of liberation . . . as in Antiquity, on the basis, of course, of a number of rules, styles, inventions to be found in the cultural environment."[109] While the communal setting is indispensable--both as a source of

models and as a context for practice--the critical aspect of the aesthetic cultivation of the self is that the "work on the self with its attendant austerity is not imposed on the individual . . . *but is a choice about existence made by the individual*" [my emphasis].[110]

The dignity of human life calls for a recognition by a person and by others that she is the autonomous author of her life, that in virtue of her choices she sees herself in the form this life has taken. At this point the Foucauldian vision of the self intersects with liberal visions on the one hand, and with Romantic-expressivist visions on the other; one may even surmise, in fact, that Foucault's stupendous popularity is due in part to the earnest call for the re-invigoration of these two sources of selfhood. Foucault shares with liberals the demand that an individual's life would be unaffected by others, but he does not couch the individual's choices in terms of adherence to either universal, moral imperatives nor to fundamental, rationally-determined beliefs and life-plans. Instead, the choices Foucault has in mind pertain to questions of how the self could express its distinctiveness (which is not pregiven) through its mode of conduct in a self-constituted range of experiences. If the early Foucault championed difference and rapture within the self, now a yearning for the unity of life seems to infuse his vision, but it is an aesthetic unity, not a normative one (like Weber's). In this centering on the individual's experience, Foucault, the harsh critic of modernity, apparently embraces what Simmel thought most characterizes modernist culture, where "life itself becomes the purpose of life."

Foucault did not have the opportunity to examine in depth the applicability of the Greek model of selfood to contemporary society. It is doubtful that given the regulative and homogenizing practices of modern civil society, the aesthetic exploration of singular style

and identity could be a viable option to most people. In any event, by positing this model as an answer to a profoundly disciplined society, Foucault was invariably inviting a new kind of ethos, one that may be termed an "ethos of suspicion." Since "it is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals,"[111] if the self wishes to reclaim its distinctiveness a calling into question of all these aspects of its identity is imperative. This journey of critical reflection could be halted at any point, but in principle it has no end: since there is nothing pregiven or natural about the self, any of its characteristics might be divulged as another--yet uncovered--fabrication of power. For negative entrapment, the dilemma of whether it is really the self that makes the choices is not a meaningless one-- only open ended. Furthermore, because power could also produce the self's notions of freedom (e.g., the confession), one must be circumspect in case the adversary of power might really be the same as power and the act of defiance in truth an act of reaffirmation.[112] Thus, because normalizing power permeates all aspects of our being, including our motivations and tools for confronting it, the more inclusive we wish our liberty to be (and Foucault's aesthetic of existence certainly urges such inclusivity), the more doubtful we have to become about our present selves.

Seen from this perspective, one wonders whether the late Foucault was confronting an early Foucault problematic: The ethos of hyper-suspicion and its aftermath resembles the quandary of cogito and the unthought. As Foucault explains in *The Order of Things* (see section II above), contemporary critical thought (cogito) is always vulnerable, fearful of being under the sway of forces it is unaware of or misunderstands; in Foucault's genealogical stage, this unthought is not desire or language, but an omnipresent and

intangible power. To foster the self's freedom, Foucauldian philosophy strives to uncover how the mind and body have been silently and thoroughly shaped; similarly to other post-Enlightenment intellectual projects, this thought seems to be "imbued with the necessity of thinking the unthought--or reflecting the contents of the *In-itself* in the form of the *For itself.*"[113]

By fathoming fully the forces that have shaped it, by retrieving them to the light of critical thought, the self might reveal that it is nothing but an artifact of power, even when it thought it successfully resisted this power. The disciplined, modern self gradually learns that the mechanisms that have forged it predate it and escape its control. Some may perceive a danger in this endless project of clarification and articulation: its possible *fulfillment* could result in an agent that is divorced from the sources of selfhood that render its life worth while, an agent that has lost its adherence to (externally-imposed) fundamental values, motivations, notions of freedom--in short, everything that endows its life with meaning. From this point of view, the more the self is able to achieve lucidity about its predicament by unveiling the imprints of power, the more it grapples with the prospect of groundless, nihilistic existence; the more assured of the independent origin of its choices and conduct it becomes, the more it must wonder who's choices are these anyway and what life do they form a part of. But Foucault does not flinch in the face of such a prospect. On the contrary, for him the path that leads to genuine freedom--a path that involves a dynamic self-formation, a following of the Socratic dictum "know [and question] yourself," a valorization of contingency--passes through the place where we learn about the void and emptiness that reside in the midst of our contemporary identities.

Conclusion

Conclusion

In the course of this work, we have explored three types of traps: the evaporation of meaning in a disciplinary and instrumentally oriented society; instinctual inhibitions, and psychic and social uncanniness; and centripetal language and productive configurations of power/knowledge. Each of these highlights a certain aspect of the self-society relation, has a different set of presuppositions (or lack thereof) about the self, and offers a particular response to the present. But despite their deep disagreements, we have seen that Weber, Freud, and Foucault betray a shared historical imagination. At the risk of repeating points made above, I would like to attempt to summarize some of their shared convictions as they emerge from the preceding three studies.

Entrapment writers portray the self as subjugated to and inescapably engulfed by its surroundings. This shared conviction has two levels. On a micro level, the individual is seen as caught within mass-organizations (Weber), or *dispositifs* and webs of power (Foucault); the human, bureaucratic machine has become essential to most domains of collective life, and any social interaction is an occasion for agonism. On a macro level, entrapment writers see the self as always existing "within" history, not at its apex, not at the dawn of a new era. We do not pilot history; we can hardly cope with its effects. This mode of being is epitomized by Kafka's *The Trial*, where the hero, K., finds himself engrossed within organizations that are both intangible and all-embracing.

> One must lie low, no matter how much it went against the grain, and try
> to understand that this great organization [The Court] remained, so to
> speak, in a state of delicate balance, and that if someone took it upon

himself to alter the disposition of things around him, he ran the risk of losing his footing and falling to destruction, while the organization would simply right itself by some compensating reaction in another part of its machinery--since everything interlocked--and remain unchanged, unless . . . it became more rigid, more vigilant, severe, and more ruthless.[1]

Weber, Freud, and especially Foucault do not accept such passivity, but like Kafka they bereave the impounding social world of benignity; history no longer promises a morally improved or whole individual, as it did for many theorists during and after the Enlightenment. This promise was the shared creed of otherwise dissimilar writers such as Helvétius and Marx, Fichte and Spencer. Spencer, who developed one of the most renowned theories of social progress and human adaptability in the nineteenth century, writes that "as surely as a clerk acquires rapidity in writing and calculation . . . so surely must the human faculties be moulded into complete fitness for the social state; so surely must evil and immorality disappear; so surely must man become perfect."[2] But for entrapment theorists, time promises, if anything, increasingly narrow specialists, disturbed neurotics, minutely produced bodies. Yet remarkably, hand in hand with their discontent with the present and even greater mistrust of the future, entrapment writers are almost devoid of nostalgia: with them time has been de-mythologized in both directions.

Entrapment theories conjoin a picture of the self as a theater of contention with these notions of engulfed existence and counter-perfectibility. This conviction takes a distinct manifestation in each writer. The personality seeks to assert itself against a world governed by functional necessities and fixed roles, and is being torn between incommensurable value spheres (or polytheistic gods, in Weber's metaphor). Freud sees the individual's life as composed of two interrelated struggles: one within the mind, where

psychic agencies ceaselessly undermine each other, and another between the self and a restricting, consuming civilization. Foucault goes as far as to present human relations as war-like, with the embattled territory being one's identity. Whatever the differences between these visions, they all see the fundamental experience of the modern self as one of strife--and, in principle, of *irresolvable* strife. The search for harmonious existence among human faculties, activities, or values, as well as between humans and nature or the cosmos, is a theme shared by Western philosophers from Plato to Schiller and beyond. Weber, Freud, and Foucault do not relinquish completely the first dimension of this quest. The personality, the psychoanalytic patient, the self engaged in forming an art of existence, all hunger for greater inner integration, for a self-forged narration. But the theories of conflict advanced by the three writers suggest definite limits to these types of projects, limits that are *historically constituted* rather than ontologically inevitable.

Now this view of history as tragic and as spawning contention leads to a normative position as well. Writers such as Kant, who believed in the teleological direction of history, summoned individuals to embrace hope as a fundamental guide for conduct, suggesting that contributing to the betterment of mankind would redeem these individuals' lives from meaninglessness. One has to behold the expected promise of the future before acting in the present. But entrapment writers tell us to disengage ourselves from these kinds of maxims and from utopianism. Weber writes that "we must not and cannot promise a fool's paradise and an easy street, neither in the here and now nor in the beyond, neither in thought nor in action, and it is the stigma of our human dignity that the peace of our souls cannot be as great as the peace of one who dreams of such paradise."[3] Their deep disagreements notwithstanding, the new ethos of these writers

demands sobriety and disillusionment. One must be courageous in face of the present; this means, among other things, relinquishing unqualified aspirations for well-being and autonomy. Quests for self-determination that do not take into consideration objective conditions (Weber), or the search for uninhibited, pleasurable satisfaction (Freud), are represented as either a failure of responsible conduct and blindness, or as forms of semi-psychotic breakdown. Hence the personality accepts "the demands of the day"; the psychoanalytic self, "the reality principle." Foucauldian resistance calls us to be vigilant in face of the impalpable, to unmask the subtle ways in which our identity is produced; this resistance takes the form of micro-confrontations, and accepts the prospect of micro-consequences and the need for perpetual re-evaluation.

This new ethos is animated by the understanding that "Man" is not sovereign, never was, and certainly cannot be under existing conditions. The three writers undermine man's position in very different ways: politically, psychically, and epistemologically. Entrapment writings, in fact, harbor a twofold consciousness of powerlessness: first, humans are seen as subject to and perplexed by the complexity and weight of the life orders they have generated (capitalism, bureaucracy, reformative institutions, science, *kultur* as such); second, they are not (for Freud and Foucault) the authors of themselves. Rather, they are the playground of uncontrollable psychic forces, feeble epistemological anchors. These outer and inner impotencies reflect and enhance one another. If our self-knowledge is merely perspective and context-dependent, misconceived, or even epistemologically impossible, for example, how can we possibly steer towards a new economic structure or a new rationale for reformative institutions? The death of man may be inherently intertwined with the death of radical politics.

The death of this type of politics may be enhanced by the recognition of entrapment writers that the social world lacks a determinant. In the nineteenth century, theorists tended to assume the interconnection among the various spheres of human life, a theme shared by Comte's positivism, Hegel's idealism, and Marx's materialism, among others. Weber and Foucault deny this presupposition, the former in his theory of value spheres, the latter in picturing loosely related *dispositifs*. Once social institutions are no longer viewed as comprising a totality, the motivation to revolutionize one sphere of human life-- whether the economic, political, erotic, or other--is greatly diminished. Such action could not lead to an extensive metamorphosis of human existence: the nuclear family is unrelated to the state, specialization is independent of capitalism.

This absence of a final cause, which is a vital notion for visions of global transformation, has another dimension. In *The Trial*, when K. asks an expert how to gain an acquittal, he learns that "that power is reserved to the highest court of all, which is quite inaccessible to you, to me, and to all of us. What the prospects are up there we do not know." When he looks in the books of laws for some guidelines, he finds "an indecent picture" in which "[a] man and woman were sitting naked on a sofa."[4] Like Kafka, entrapment theorists conceive of modernity as a peculiar hybrid in which the intensification of prescriptive human behavior is married to the evaporation of the tangible foundations for these prescriptions. Obedience to a transcendental entity or even to corporeal ones (the feudal lord, the father in the primal horde, the monarch) has been displaced by obedience to maxims whose origins are subjectless (the bureaucratic machine, the super-ego, the panopticon). For Weber, Freud, and Foucault, we have become the bearers, the containers of prescriptive anonymity; coping with the domination of the no-one has become a

debilitating psychological and political challenge.

This absence behind the forces of normalization is correlated with a growing individuation. Entrapment writers view modern selves as separated existentially and emotionally from their fellow human beings. For Weber, this isolation begins with the destruction of semi-feudal modes of production. In capitalism, human relations are impersonal and motivated by self-interest; in the office as well as in the production of knowledge, each person becomes a specialized "cog." Psychoanalytic theory gives a central place to painful individuation during the Oedipal stage, emphasizing that guilt is an entirely personal experience which, nevertheless, has social origins and functions. Foucault expresses the idea of isolation and forced "singularization" in his depictions of the post-Enlightenment practices of imprisonment and the clinical confession. The results of this movement towards atomization, which can be extrapolated from the writings of Weber and Foucault, are twofold: separated individuals find it difficult to assemble the knowledge and to develop the cognitive understanding needed to fathom their predicament comprehensively and truly, and even if such an understanding was to be gained, detached individuals lack the mutual trust and the social practices needed for ameliorative collective action.

Weber, Freud, and especially Foucault present a very elastic view of the self; let us say that they democratize our moral language. None of them *defines* a human being by her basic need to produce, live in a community, conduct herself rationally, belong to the race, possess political liberty, or explore herself aesthetically. In spite of his essentialist presuppositions, Weber does not suggest a superior, metaphysically based model of

selfhood. The personality is no better or higher than the mystic, the nationalist than the pacifist. Similarly, despite the normative presuppositions underlying his delineation of the psyche and his demand for more room for expression of the instincts, Freud emphasizes that the patient consumed by a demanding ego-ideal is neither preferable to nor essentially different from the psychotic, and the same applies to the heterosexual and the homosexual. Foucault's negative notion of entrapment deliberately aims at questioning any hierarchy and discourse of truth that is constitutive of identities. Yet the validity of these writers' expressions of discontent could be undermined by their disquiet with ontological and evaluative discourse, and their depiction of human beings as clay-like. Hence entrapment theories, to various degrees, rebuke modernity in the name of myriad *denied capacities*, and oppose the dominance of normalized and disciplined human conduct where a multiplicity of meanings, sexualities, or languages could have existed.

I have mentioned some of the tenets shared by entrapment writers despite their theoretical incompatibilities, which have been emphasized throughout this dissertation. But there is a further issue to ponder: Do the three types of traps examined here lead to one another? Are they fundamentally interdependent? Perhaps only in an epoch in which we apprehend the disenchantment of culture, a time of homelessness in respect to former collective anchors of belonging, can we also view our encounters with social institutions and other human beings as power struggles. Psychoanalysis submits that our social life is regulated by ungrounded sanctions that are becoming increasingly rigid, and that the history responsible for erecting this ambiance is imbued with traumas, violence, sacrifice, and externally imposed guilt; Foucault takes the Freudian vista to its ultimate conclusion, portraying the social environment *in toto* as a threat to identity rather than as a locus for

its affirmation. And, in another direction, conceivably it is the "disciplining" of our horizons of significance, our inability to generate meaningful interpretations of our daily life, that exacerbates our homelessness in the social terrain we inhabit. These issues deserve further probing. They suggest that we should not think merely in terms of distinct theories of entrapment, but must explore the common "gestalt" that may lurk behind them.

Notes

1. For discussions of the self in the liberal-communitarian debate see: John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); Michael Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); and Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

2. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, V, i.f. 50. For a discussion of the differences between book I and V see: E. G. West, "Adam Smith and Alienation," in: *Essays on Adam Smith*, eds. A. Skinner and T. Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 540-552. See also in the same collection: R. L. Heilbroner, "Decline and Decay in *The Wealth of Nations*," pp. 524-539.

3. J. G. Herder, *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, ed. F. M. Bernard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 310.

4. J. J. Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Barbara Fox (London: Dent, 1969), p. 10. For a discussion of the close relation between Rousseau's and Herder's critiques of modernity see: F. M. Bernard, *Self-Direction and Political Legitimacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

I am using solely masculine pronouns in the next few sections in order to be consistent with the language of Rousseau. While these pronouns are used by most authors under discussion, their use in Rousseau has special meaning, since it is unclear to what extent women were actually included in his critical discourse. This question, while central, is outside the scope of this dissertation. As a general rule, I am using masculine language, and the concept of "man," wherever it seems particularly pertinent to the intentions or underlying convictions of the author.

5. J. J. Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality," *The Basic Political Writings*, trans. D. A. Gress (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), p. 59.

6. Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality," p. 81.

7. Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality," p. 106, note 15 (translation altered).

8. Rousseau, "Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts," in *The Basic Political Writings*, p. 4.

9. On the place of *Julie, or The New Helöise* in this context see: A. Ferrara, *Modernity and Authenticity: A Study of the Social and Ethical Thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Albany: State University of New York, 1993), Ch. 5. Ferrara claims that Rousseau presents Julie as a person who denies her feelings and authentic needs for the sake of following social conventions and expectations. She conceives her life as a collection of roles (wife, mother, daughter) to be optimally fulfilled--and this ethic leads to her destruction.

10. Rousseau scorns the conviction that any law exists in nature, or, at least, that such a law could be found and agreed upon by reasoned reflection. See "Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts," p. 35.

11. Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*, I. 289-294. Quoted in C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 277.

12. Antoine-Nicolas De Condorcet, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, trans. June Barraclough (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1955), p. 179.

13. For a discussion of these themes see: Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), Ch. 1.

14. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus* (New York: Nal and Penguin, 1965), p. 200. I am using here the 1831 edition.

15. For Kant the concept of *Kultur* has two main components, personal-internal and collective-external. On the latter level, he mentions developments such as mankind's increasingly sophisticated interaction with nature, technological innovations, progress in the arts and sciences, the establishment of constitutional and republican regimes, and the league of peace. On the internal and individual level, he notes the process whereby people learn to sublimate their brute desires, to discipline themselves, and to give more place for intellectual needs. See: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner, 1965), # 83.

16. I. Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. H. Paton (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 120.

17. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, # 83.

18. More specifically, the Kantian imperatives read as follows. (1) "Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a universal law of nature," and (2) "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end." *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 89, p. 96.

19. Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiment*, eds. D. Raphael and A. Macfie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 183. See in this context the commentary by I. Hont and M. Ignatieff in their "Needs and Justice in: *The Wealth of Nations*: an Introductory Essay," in *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish*

Enlightenment (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 8-13.

20. Kant, "Universal History," *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* (Indianapolis: Hacket, 1985), pp. 31-32, p. 32.

21. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, # 83.

22. Kant, "Perpetual Peace," *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, p. 124.

23. A. Hirshman, *The Passions and the Interests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 73. According to Montesquieu, the virtues that are cultivated through engagement in commercial relations are also beneficial in the political sphere. Moderation and sound judgment, for example, are needed for political, republican life as much as for successful economic activity. Despite the wealth capitalism creates, and the possible corruption of character that may come with abundance, this economic order may be seen as actually having a positive effect upon the character of the individual and hence upon the quality of the polity.

24. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, # 85.

25. Yirmiahu Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 180.

26. Kant, "Theory and Practice," *Perpetual Peace*, pp. 64-65 (note).

27. Jean Paul Richter, *Horn of Oberon: Jean Paul Richter's School of Aesthetics*, trans. M. Hale (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973), p. 15, p. 16. I am indebted here to M. Gillespie. See his: *Nihilism Before Nietzsche* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 64-65.

28. This dissertation is mostly concerned with intellectual transformations in the Continent. Yet it seems pertinent to discuss here Mary Shelley's work, since the themes she so imaginatively expresses are also shared by contemporary German writers, as exemplified by Jean Paul Richter.

29. Masao Miyoshi, *The Divided Self*, (New York: New York University Press, 1969), p. ix. For a more recent study of the phenomenon of doubles in modern literature see: Karl Miller, *Doubles: Studies in Literary History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1985). For an ingenious psychoanalytic interpretation see Otto Rank, *The Double*, trans. H. Tucker (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971).

30. Paul Cantor, *Creator and Created* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. xii. In another study, M. H. Abrams suggests that the first to develop the notion of humanity's Promethean role was Shaftesbury, who in this context glorified the imaginative poet. The same theme appears in the works of German writers such as Lessing, Goethe, and Herder. See: M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York: Norton, 1958), pp. 272-285.

31. M. Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 74.

32. M. Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 46.

16. M. Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 52.

34. M. Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 53.

35. Muriel Spark, *Mary Shelley* (New York: Dutton, 1987), p. 164.

36. M. Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 207.

37. M. Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 160.

38. Kant, "Universal History," *Perpetual Peace*, p. 31.

39. Rousseau, "On the Social Contract," *The Basic Political Writings*, p. 151.

40. B. Yack, *The Longing for Total Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 24.

24. Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty" in his *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).

42. George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), # 258.

43. Karl Marx, "The German Ideology," in: *The Portable Marx*, ed. E. Kamenka (New York: Penguin, 1983), p. 194.

44. Marx, *The Portable Marx*, p. 189.

45. The following, celebrated quotation expresses this idea: ". . . [C]ommunism, as fully developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as a fully developed humanism equals naturalism; it is the *genuine* resolution of the conflict between man and nature, and between man and man, the true solution of the conflict between existence and being, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddle of history, and knows itself to be the resolution." See: K. Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," in: *Early Writings*, trans. R. Livingstone and G. Benton (New York: Penguin, 1992), p. 348.

46. Marx, *The Portable Marx*, p. 189.

47. Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," in: *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 63.

48. Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity & Authenticity* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 99.

49. Herder, *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, p. 292.

50. Herder, *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, p. 293. Herder agrees with Rousseau that contentment and well-being should be formed by a certain relation to oneself and not through multiple layers of external dependency. "If happiness is to be found on this earth, it has to be looked for within every sentient being. Every man has the standard of happiness within himself. He carries it within the form in which he has been fashioned and it is only within this sphere that he can be happy . . . ." (p. 311).

51. Taylor, *Hegel*, Ch. 1.

52. Taylor, *Hegel*, p. 15.

53. Wilhelm von Humboldt, *The Limits of State Action*, ed. J. W. Burrow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 16. Mill quotes these same words in *On Liberty*.

54. Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, eds. E. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 189.

55. Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, p. 161.

56. Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," p. 123.

57. Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," in *Untimely Meditations*, p. 127.

58. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. W. Kaufmann and R. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1967), # 767 (translation altered).

59. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, # 941.

60. Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," p. 111.

61. Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator," p. 129.

62. Quoted from W. Hennis, *Essays in Reconstruction* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1988), p. 146. Weber, according to the story, said these words to a group of students after he had participated in a discussion with Oswald Spengler. This was shortly before his death. The original reference is in E. Baumgarten, *Max Weber: Werk und Person* (Tubingen: Mohr, 1964), p. 554 ff.

63. For recent works on Marx and Weber see, for example, Randall Collins, *Weberian Sociological Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), Ch. 1.

64. For Weber, work (or vocation) is needed in order to make the "totality of life" ethically significant, and not because the essence of the human species-being is in the

realm of production, as Marx believed.

65. Max Weber, "Socialism," in: *Max Weber Selections in Translation*, ed. W. G. Runciman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 253, p. 265.

66. Weber, "Socialism," p. 260.

67. Karl Löwith, *Max Weber and Karl Marx* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1988), p. 48. The idea that human beings create those offspring which destroy them (i.e., the 'Frankenstein Syndrome') is expressed by Weber in relation to the factory and bureaucracy in the following passage:

> An inanimate machine is mind objectified. Only this provides it with the power to force men into its service and to dominate their everyday working life as completely as is actually the case in the factory. Reified intelligence is also that animated machine, the bureaucratic organization, with its specialization of trained skills, its division of jurisdiction, its rules and hierarchical relations of authority. Together with the inanimate machine it is busy fabricating the shell of bondage which men will perhaps be forced to inhabit some day, as powerless as the fellahs of ancient Egypt. This might happen *if* a technically superior administration *were to be the ultimate and sole* value in the ordering of their affairs...

"Parliament and Government in Germany," *Economy and Society*, eds. G. Roth and C. Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 1402 (translation altered).

68. See: Max Weber, *General Economic History* (New York: Collier-Macmillan, 1961). It should be noted that Weber pays little attention in these lectures (1919-20) to the role of the Protestant ethic in the emergence of capitalism, but it is unlikely that he changed his mind in this matter. For a different view, see Randall Collins' discussion in his *Weberian Sociological Theory*.

69. Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," *Early Writings*, p. 328.

70. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 75.

71. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 181.

72. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 266.

73. Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in: *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. H. Gerth and C. Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 148.

74. Weber, "National Character and the Junkers," *From Max Weber*, p. 393.

75. Marianne Weber wrote that the "new proclamations of the great poet Stefan George, which in many respects referred back to Nietzsche's range of ideas, also negated all ruling powers of the machine age — rationalism, capitalism, democracy and

socialism. They were addressed to a selected few of spiritual nobility and were directed at the *form* of existence, as the aristocratic general attitude towards life: they did not, however, supply norms for action or set new, tangible, substantial goals." See Marianne Weber, *Max Weber: a Biography* (New York: Wiley & Sons, 1975), p. 319. On Weber's relationship with the poet see pp. 454-64.

76. Weber, "Religious Rejections," in: *From Max Weber*, p. 342; For an excellent discussion of these issues see: Lawrence Scaff, *Fleeing the Iron Cage* (Berkeley University Press, 1991), particularly chapters 3 & 5.

77. The Freudian critique on the notion of bounded identity is, of course, even more forceful than Weber's. In particular, the constitutive role Freud assigns to the super-ego ridicules any prospect for autonomous self-formation. I shall explore these issue at length below.

Chapter Two

1. Marianne Weber, *Max Weber: a Biography*, p. 319.

2. Wilhelm Hennis, *Max Weber: Essays in Reconstruction* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1988).

3. See: R. Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait* (London: Methuen, 1966), and Jurgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Vol. 1 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984).

4. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Unwin University Books, 1930); *The Religion of India, The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism* (New York: Free Press, 1958); *Ancient Judaism* (New York: Free Press, 1952); *The Religion of China, Confucianism and Taoism* (New York: Free Press, 1964). The first three works are incorporated in *GARS* I, II and III respectively. Since the translations of Weber's work are uneven in quality, I made references both to the English and German texts throughout this chapter.

5. *GARS*-I, pp. 237-75, pp. 536-73. Both texts are translated in *FMW*. The first is titled "Social Psychology of World Religions," and the second "Religious Rejections of the World and their Directions," pp. 267-301, pp. 323-62. For the centrality of these texts to Weber's work as a whole, see Friedreich H. Tenbruck, "The Problem of Thematic Unity in the Works of Max Weber," *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 31, No. 3, September 1980, pp. 116-51.

6. *ES,* p. 399; *WG,* p. 245.

7. *GARS*-I, pp. 1-16. This 'Author's Introduction' appears in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.*

8. "Religious Rejections," *FMW,* p. 324; *GARS*-I, p. 537.

9. As noted above, Weber uses rationality in many different senses, and there are a few places where he acknowledges this. For example, in "The Social Psychology of the World Religions" he distinguishes among three types: 1) theoretical mastery of reality by using increasingly clearer concepts and formulations. 2) Purposive, instrumental rationality (*Zewckrational*). 3) Systematic arrangement of reality or of human conduct according to some ultimate value (*FMW,* pp. 293-94; *GARS*-I, pp. 265-67). My point about the 'emptiness' of rationality applies mainly to (3) but it may pertain to the first two as well. There are, however, other senses of rationality in Weber, particular "value rationality" (*Wertrational*). For a discussion of the different meanings of rationality in Weber's work, see Rogers Brubaker, *The Limits of Rationality* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984).

10. "Social Psychology," *FMW,* p. 280; *GARS*-I, p. 252.

11. Weber describes the relation this way: "The nature of the desired sacred values has been strongly influenced by the nature of the external interest-situation and the corresponding way of life of the ruling strata and thus by the social stratification itself. But the reverse also holds: wherever the direction of the whole way of life has been methodically rationalized, it has been profoundly determined by the ultimate values towards which this rationalization has been directed. These values and positions were thus *religiously* determined." "Social Psychology," *FMW,* pp. 286-87; *GARS*-I, p. 259. See also my discussion below.

12. "Social Psychology," *FMW,* p. 270; *GARS*-I, p. 240. For the same reasons Weber also rejects, for the most part, Nietzsche's argument in *On the Genealogy of Morals* about "ressentiment." While this concept is useful in interpreting some periods of Judaism, it does not apply to Christianity and not at all to Buddhism as Nietzsche claimed. My reading of Weber suggests that it is not the "will to power" which propels human conduct and history, but primarily the desire for meaning. See: *ES,* pp. 494-99.

13. "Social Psychology," *FMW,* p. 281; *GARS*-I, p. 253.

14. Weber's interpretation of this shift from magic to religions of salvation, as well as of the evolutions of these religions themselves, contains a teleological ingredient. This is in contrast to his explicit position which discarded teleology. According to Tenbruck, "Weber who throughout his life had upheld the uniqueness of history against the laws of progress, is now encountered in his work on religion in the opposing camp of evolutionism. See: "The Problem of Thematic Unity in the Works of Max Weber," p. 333. The teleological component in Weber's thought, however, is rather complex and certainly does not involve an argument about the immanent movement of history itself.

15. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 353; *GARS*-I, p. 567. Nietzsche makes a similar claim, averring that "the meaninglessness of suffering, not suffering itself, was the curse that lay over mankind so far. . . ." See: Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), third essay, # 28.

16. "Social Psychology," *FMW*, p. 271; *GARS*-I, p. 242.

17. As Weber aptly remarks, "'From what' and 'for what' one wished to be redeemed and, let us not forget 'could be' redeemed, depended upon one's image of the world." "Social Psychology," *FMW*, p. 280; *GARS*-I, p. 252.

18. For Weber's discussion of salvation in *ES* see pp. 518-576. For an insightful comparison between *ES* on the one hand, and the *"Einleitung"* and the *"Zwischenbetrachtung"* on the other, see Wolfgang Schluchter, "Weber's Sociology of Rationalism and Typology of Religious Rejections of the World," in: S. Whimster and S. Lash, (eds.), *Max Weber: Rationality and Modernity* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), pp. 92-118. Schluchter also elaborates on the differences between Weber's two ideal types of salvation.

19. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 327; *GARS*-I, p. 540.

20. "Religions Rejections," *FMW*, p. 330; *GARS*-I, p. 543-44.

21. *ES*, p. 450; *WG*, p. 275.

22. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 352; *GARS*-I, p. 566.

23. Weber distinguishes between "ethical" (or emissary) and "exemplary" prophecy (*"Sendungs Prophetie"* and *"Exemplarischen Prohetie"*). The first demands, in the name of God, obedience to some ethical duty. The second demonstrates by his *personal conduct*, a route for salvation. Thus Zoroaster and Muhammad belong to the first category, and Buddha to the second. The ethical prophets were crucial to the Judaeo-Christian tradition in general and in modern times to the development of Protestantism in particular. Nevertheless, both types provide a source of meaning. See: *ES*, pp. 447-450.

24. *ES*, p. 1117; *WG*, p. 658.

25. "Religious Directions," *FMW*, p. 353; *GARS*-I, p. 567.

26. It is a mistake to rely only on "Science as a Vocation" in this matter since, for Weber, the problems of meaninglessness and disenchantment do not result merely from the evolution of modern, natural sciences.

27. Max Weber, "objectivity in the Social Sciences," *TMSS*, p. 57; "Die 'Objektivität' Sozialwissenschaftlicher Und Sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis," *GAW*, p. 154.

28. This critique of Weber was made most forcefully by W. Mommsen in his *Max Weber and German Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

29. The best and most comprehensive discussion of Weber's concept of "personality" is by Harvey Goldman. See his *Max Weber and Thomas Mann* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). Other relevant discussions include: Mark Warren, "Max Weber's Liberalism for a Nietzschean World," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 82, No. 1, March 1988, pp. 31-49; Edward Portis, "Max Weber's Theory of Personality," *Sociological Inquiry*, 48, 1978, pp. 113-20; W. Hennis, *Essays in Reconstruction*, pp. 90-101.

30. Max Weber, *Roscher and Knies: The Logical Problems of Historical Economics* (New York: The Free Press, 1975), p. 192; "Knies und das Irrationalitätsproblem," *GAW*, p. 132. (Henceforth *RK*.)

31. "Objectivity," *TMSS*, p. 55; *GAW*, p. 152.

32. "Objectivity," *TMSS*, p. 55; *GAW*, p. 152.

33. *ES*, p. 573; *WG*, p. 346.

34. *RK*, p. 199; *GAW*, p. 138.

35. *The Religions of China* 235. (The translation is modified according to: Max Weber, *Confucianism and Taoism* (London: London School of Economics, 1984), p. 75.

36. "Ceremonial prescription regulated questions and answers, indispensable offers, as well as the exact manner of grateful decline, also visits, presents, expressions of respect, condolence and joyful sympathy." *The Religions of China*, p. 234.

37. "The Religions of Asia," *MWST*, p. 200; *GARS-II*, p. 373.

38. W. Hennis, *Essays in Reconstruction*, p. 92.

39. "The Religions of Asia," *MWST*, p. 204; *GARS-II*, p. 378.

40. "The Religions of Asia," *MWST*, p. 201; *GARS-II*, p. 373.

41. "The Spirit of Capitalism," *MWST*, p. 145; *GARS-I*, p. 172.

42. "The Spirit of Capitalism," *MWST*, pp. 170, 171; *GARS-I*, pp. 203, 204.

43. See: "Discipline and Charisma," a part of the studies of Charisma in *ES*, pp. 1148-56; *WG*, pp. 681-87. I am using the translation in *FMW*, pp. 253-62.

44. Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 126, 130, 129.

45. "The Meaning of Discipline," *FMW*, pp. 260-61; *WG*, p. 686. For a comparison between Weber and Marx in this respect see: Randall Collins, *Weberian Sociological Theory*, Ch.1. For a comparison between Weber and Foucault see: Colin Gordon: "The Soul of the Citizen: Max Weber and Michel Foucault on Rationality and Government,"

in *Max Weber: Rationality and Modernity*, 293-316.

46. "The Meaning of Discipline," *FMW*, p. 253; *WG*, p. 681.

47. "Bureaucracy," *FMW*, p. 228; *WG*, p. 570.

48. "The Meaning of Discipline," *FMW*, p. 262; *WG*, p. 686.

49. "The Meaning of Discipline," *FMW*, pp. 257, 256; *WG*, pp. 684, 683.

50. "The Meaning of Discipline" *FMW*, p. 262; *WG*, p. 686. Marx often depicts the worker in rather similar terms. For example, he writes that "[t]he habit of doing only one thing converts him [the worker] into an organ which operates with the certainty of a force of nature, while his connections with the whole mechanism compels him to work with the regularity of a machine." See: Karl Marx, *Capital Vol. 1*, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 469. For a discussion on the discipline of bodies in Weber see: Bryan S. Turner, *Max Weber: From History to Modernity* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 113-60.

51. "Bureaucracy," *FMW*, p. 215-16; *WG*, p. 563.

52. *ES*, p. 257; *WG*, p. 250.

53. "The Meaning of Discipline," *FMW*, p. 254; *WG*, p. 682.

54. "Parliament and Government in Germany," *ES*, p. 1402; *GPS*, p. 332. (Translation altered.)

55. "Parliament and Government in Germany," *ES*, p. 1404; *GPS*, p. 335. It is unfortunate that Weber--who was more concerned with the implications of this ethos of bureaucracy than anyone else at his time--did not look for an ethical ground on which submission to and internalization of authority may be qualified. The consequences of this attitude for Germany and the world are well known:

"Much of the horribly painstaking thoroughness in the execution of the Final Solution--a thoroughness that usually strikes the observer as typically German, or else as characteristic of the perfect bureaucrat--can be traced to the odd notion, indeed very common in Germany, that to be law-abiding means not merely to obey the laws but to act as though one were the legislator of the laws that one obeys. Hence the conviction that nothing less then going beyond the call of duty will do."

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: a Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 1964), p. 137.

56. "Religions Rejections," *FMW*, p. 328; *GARS*-I, p. 541.

57. An earlier version of these reflections appears in *ES*, pp. 576-610; *WG*, pp. 348-366. One of the major differences between the two texts is that in the later one Weber gives much more emphasis to the place the different value-spheres have as routes to inner-

worldly salvation. See my discussion below.

58. Rogers Brubaker. *The Limits of Rationality*. p. 72. As Brubaker notes, Weber thus suggests pluralism of values at two levels: within spheres and between spheres.

59. Weber is rather explicit in this respect. "We know of no scientifically demonstrable ideals. To be sure, our labors are now rendered more difficult, since we must create our ideals from within our chests in the very age of subjectivist culture. But we must not and cannot promise a fool's paradise and an easy street, neither in the here and now nor in the beyond, neither in thought nor in action, and it is the stigma of our human dignity that the peace of our souls cannot be as great as the peace of one who dreams of such paradise."

See: Max Weber. *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik* (Tübingen: J. C. Mohr, 1924), p. 420. Quoted here from Scaff, *Fleeing the Iron Cage*, p. 82.

60. The young Weber was particularly prone to such gloomy assessments. "It is not peace and happiness that we have to bequeath to our descendants, but *eternal struggle* for the maintenance and improvement of our national species." The same imperative of struggle seems to hold for the individual's life. See: Max Weber, "The National State and Economic Policy" (Inaugural Address given at Freiburg, 1895), in J. Goldstein and J. Boyer (eds.), *Nineteenth Century Europe: Liberalism and its Critics* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988), p. 450.

61. The ethic of brotherly love is especially inadequate for the politician as Weber argues in "Politics as a Vocation." Yet the same is true for any secular person/citizen who wishes to live in the world and according to its ways. See Weber's discussion in *FMW*, pp. 114-28.

62. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, pp. 344, 345; *GARS-I*, pp. 557, 558.

63. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 347; *GARS-I*, p. 560.

64. 'Religious Rejections' *FMW*, p. 346; *GARS-I*, p. 560.

65. Weber did not see the erotic sphere as capable of answering the needs of the self in modern culture. This can be learned from his opinion of Otto Gross, a student of Freud who used psycho-analysis as the foundation for a new, free sexual ethic. Under conditions of seclusion this ethic was supposed to relieve the individual from the anxiety, purposelessness and emotional emptiness of modern life. On Weber's relation to Gross see: *Max Weber: a Biography*, pp. 372-380, and Wolfgang Schwentker, "Passion as a Mode of Life: Max Weber and the Otto Gross Circle," in W. Mommsen and J. Osterhammel (eds.), *Max Weber and His Contemporaries* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), pp. 483-98.

66. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 342; *GARS-I*. p. 555.

67. *ES*, p. 608; *WG*, p. 365.

68. "Science as a Vocation," *FMW*, p. 137; *GAW*, p. 591.

69. "Science as a Vocation," *FMW*, p. 138; *GAW*, p. 592.

70. "Science as a Vocation" *FMW*, pp. 139, 140; *GAW*, p. 594.

71. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 335; *GARS*-I, p. 548. These words were written with WWI in the background.

72. "Politics as a Vocation" *FMW*, p. 117; *GPS*, p. 547-48.

73. "Politics as a Vocation," *FMW*, p. 115; *GPS*, p. 545.

74. "Politics as a Vocation," *FMW*, p. 117; *GPS*, p. 547.

75. Max Weber, "Between Two Laws," in *Weber: Political Writings*, eds. P. Lassman & R. Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 75.

76. "Structures of Power," *FMW*, p. 176; *WG*, p. 530.

77. In "Objectivity" Weber defines culture this way: "The concept of culture is a *value concept*. Empirical reality becomes 'culture' to us because and insofar as we relate it to value ideas. It includes those segments and only those segments of reality which have become significant to us because of this value-relevance." See: *TMSS*, p. 76; *GAW*, p. 175.

78. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 353; *GARS*-I, p. 567.

79. "Objectivity," *TMSS*, p. 78; *GAW*, p. 178.

80. "Objectivity," *TMSS*, p. 82; *GAW*, p. 182.

81. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 356; *GARS*-I, p. 570.

82. "Religious Rejections," *FMW*, p. 357; *GARS*-I, p. 571.

Chapter Three

The references to Freud's writings in this chapter refer to *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, eds. J. Strachey and A. Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74), 24 volumes. Citations follow this order: title of work, volume number, and page.

1. Max Weber, *Selections in Translation*, ed. W. G. Runciman, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 386.

2. Weber, *Selections in Translation*, p. 385. Philip Rieff elaborated this critique of psychoanalysis, arguing that it impoverishes the ethical discourse of modern culture, and weakens the commitment of the modern self to participate in communal life. See his *The Triumph of the Therapeutic* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), and *Freud: The Mind of a Moralist* (New York: Viking Press, 1961).

3. Freud explicitly refers to this question in his "New Introductory Lectures," which were written more than two decades after Weber made his comments on Freudianism. Freud says there that the only *Weltanschauung* that psychoanalysis is associated with is that of the natural sciences. See "New Introductory Lectures," *XXII*, pp. 158-82.

4. Adolf Grünbaum, *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis: A Philosophical Critique* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984). See also his *Validation in the Clinical Theory of Psychoanalysis* (International Universities Press, 1993). For other discussions about the scientific validity of psychoanalysis see: Allen Esterson, *Seductive Mirage* (Open Court, 1993); Malcolm Macmillan, *Freud Evaluated: The Completed Arc* (North-Holland, 1991); and Frederick Crews, "The Unknown Freud," *New York Review of Books*, XL, No. 19, Nov. 18, 1993, pp. 55-66.

5. Charles Taylor, "Neutrality in Political Science," in *Philosophy and the Human Sciences: Philosophical Papers 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 90. Taylor discusses in this article theories in political science, but his insights may be extended to other social and human sciences as well.

6. "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, p. 97.

7. "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes," *XIV*, pp. 121-22.

8. "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," *XVIII*, p. 29.

9. Norman O. Brown, *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytic Meaning of History* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1959), pp. 9-10.

10. "New Introductory Lectures," *XXII*, p. 110. For the import of political metaphors in Freud's work, see José Brunner, "On the Political Rhetoric of Freud's Individual Psychology," *History of Political Thought*, Vol. V, No. II, Summer 1984, pp. 315-332.

11. "Civilization and its Discontents, *XXI*, p. 134.

12. "On Narcissism," *XIV*, p. 85.

13. "On Narcissism," *XIV*, p. 85.

14. "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, pp. 118-19. In his first theory of instincts, Freud expresses the same duality of destruction (sexual instincts) vs. preservation (ego instincts).

15. "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, p. 112.

16. "New Introductory Lectures," *XXII*, p. 95.

17. Plato is mentioned in Freud's discussion of Eros in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (*XVII*, pp. 57-8), and Schopenhauer in "New Introductory Lectures" (*XXII*, p. 107). In a different text, "Civilization and Its Discontents," Freud's indebtedness to his intellectual background is more manifest. He points to the similarity between his views of Eros and Death and those of Goethe in *Faust*. See *XXI*, pp. 120-21. Freud's first theory of instincts, he acknowledges, originated in an insight of Schiller's about the centrality of love and hunger in Human life. See "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, p. 117.

18. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 233. For Heidegger, *Dasein* has a sudden sense of uncanniness, of not being at home, when it experiences itself as being-in-the-world. *Dasein* attempts to escape this state by losing itself in an environment it considers familiar and safe: the world of everyday concerns, of the "they."

19. "The Uncanny," *XVII*, p. 220.

20. "The Uncanny," *XVII*, p. 225. This is a quotation from Grimm's German dictionary (1877, 4, Part 2, p. 875).

21. "Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis," *XVI*, p. 285. Freud repeats the same metaphor in "A Difficulty in Psychoanalysis, *XVII*, p. 143.

22. "The Uncanny," *XVII*, p. 241.

23. E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Tales of E. T. A. Hoffmann*, eds. L. Kent and S. Knight (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 95.

24. Freud's interpretation is in fact supported by the text. Describing his father while he sat together with Coppelius, Nathanael writes that "his mild and honest features seemed to have been distorted into a repulsive and diabolical mask by some horrible convulsive pain. He looked like Coppelius . . . ." See *Tales of E. T. H. Hoffmann*, p. 98.

25. "The Uncanny," *XVII*, p. 223. At this stage, Freud did not yet use the concept "super-ego."

26. "The Uncanny," *XVII*, p. 235.

27. J. Laplanche and J. B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (New York: Norton, 1973), p. 349.

28. Laplanche and Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, p. 354. This interpretation of projection is partly based on the Schreber case study.

29. In "The Uncanny," Freud does not distinguish between psychotic pathologies and narcissistic ones, and seems to regard them as one category. As Olsen and Koppe explain, Freud "found that most of the traits [of psychoses], that is, self-centeredness, lack of libidinous object cathexis, the loss of the sense of reality, and domination of primary processes, were related to their narcissistic mode." They add that "what in particular distinguishes the neuroses from the psychoses is their reliance on the defense mechanisms of projection and denial in contrast to repression." See O. Olsen and S. Koppe, *Freud's Theory of Psychoanalysis*, trans. J. C. Delay and C. Pedersen (New York, New York University Press, 1988), pp. 244-45. However, Freud's classification of psychic illnesses changed with the introduction of the super-ego. In "Neurosis and Psychosis" (1923), Freud argues that "Transference neuroses correspond to a conflict between the ego and the id; narcissistic neuroses [such as melancholia], to a conflict between the ego and the super-ego; and psychoses, to one between the ego and the external world." (XIX, p. 152). This distinction is problematic, since Freud claims that part of the demands of the external world is represented by the super-ego. In any event, in my discussion below I will continue to refer to projection as a psychotic defence with narcissistic motivations.

30. I am indebted to Charles Taylor for the term "disenchantment of culture."

31. "An Outline of Psychoanalysis," *XXIII*, p. 206, p. 207.

32. "An Outline of Psychoanalysis, *XXII*, p. 206

33. "New Introductory Lectures," *XXII*, p. 67.

34. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 220. For a psychoanalytic critique of MacIntyre, see Fred Alford, *The Self in Social Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), ch. 1. Alford shares MacIntyre's understanding of the self in terms of narrative within a given, constitutive social context. He criticizes MacIntyre, however, for not granting the self sufficient capacity to change and shape its circumstances in opposition to tradition and social expectations. Alford also discusses in this chapter other communitarian theorists.

35. "The Disillusionment of the War," *XIV*, p. 286.

36. Walter Benjamin, "Some Reflections on Kafka," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), p. 143.

37. "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, pp. 135-36.

38. "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, p. 141, p. 142.

39. "The Future of an Illusion," *XXI*, p. 11.

40. "Group Psychology," *XVIII*, p. 116.

41. "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, p. 115, p. 116. Freud was highly critical of Woodrow Wilson whom he considered to be a naive leader who misread the mutual hostility inherent to social life. See on this point: José Brunner, *Freud: The Politics of Psychoanalysis* (London: Blackwell, 1995), Ch. 4.

42. "[T]hrough some kind of diffusion or infection, the character of sanctity and inviolability--of belonging to another world, one may say--has spread from a few major prohibitions on to every other cultural regulation, law and ordinance." "The Future of an Illusion," *XXI*, p. 41.

43. "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, p. 136.

44. "The Future of an Illusion," *XXI*, p. 41.

45. "The Future of an Illusion," *XXI*, p. 39.

46. "Group Psychology," *XVIII*, p. 123.

47. "The Future of an Illusion," *XXI*, p. 15. In "Civilization and Its Discontents," Freud displays a more equivocal judgment about the value of civilization. See *XXI*, pp. 144-45.

48. "New Introductory Lectures," *XXII*, p. 180.

49. See: Paul Roazn, *Freud: Political and Social Thought* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1986), and Richard Wollheim, *Sigmund Freud* (New York: Viking Press, 1971).

50. "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," XVIII, p. 54.

51. "Three Essays on Sexuality," *VII*, p. 186.

52. Feminist theorists in the object-relations school concur with Freud that the Oedipus complex expresses a dynamic in the family, yet not only do they interpret this dynamic differently, but they also see it as socially dependent. Chodorow, for one, argues that the complex reflects a patriarchal social order in which the mother alone is responsible for nurturing the children. In these circumstances, "girls and boys expect and assume women's unique capacities for sacrifice, caring and mothering, and associate women with their own fears of regression and powerlessness. They fantasize more about men, and associate them with idealized virtues and growth." The child's need to differentiate him/herself from an all-powerful and all-engulfing mother leads to attempts to establish a distance from her, chiefly through identification with the father, who represents independence and a separate social existence. See: Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 83. For another feminist perspective, see Jessica Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and the Problem of Domination* (New York: Pantheon, 1988). Contemporary psychoanalysts differ in their views of the importance of the Oedipal complex, even questioning its existence. See Panel, "The Oedipus Complex: A Reevaluation," M. H. Sacks, Reporter, *Journal of American Psychoanalytical Association*, 33, 1985, pp. 201-16.

53. "An Outline of Psychoanalysis," *XXIII*, pp. 192-93.

54. "Preface to Reik's Ritual," *XVII*, p. 261.

55. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 270.

56. Brown, *Life Against Death*, p. 118.

57. Deleuze and Guattari advance such a contextualized view. With Foucault's work in mind, they see the complex as expressing Freud's indebtedness to views that upheld patriarchal governability within the modern, bourgeois family. Freud's conceptualization of the complex, therefore, is an attempt to mask the broader socio-economic determinants that shape the self and result in pathologies, notably capitalism. "There is no Oedipal triangle: Oedipus is always open in an open social field, Oedipus opens to the four winds, the four corners of the social field (not even 3+1, but 4+n)." For Deleuze and Guattari, in short, Oedipus symbolizes the afflictions of the existing socio-economic orders. See: G. Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (New York: Viking Press, 1977), p. 50.

58. "The Ego and the Id," *XIX*, pp. 34-5.

59. "Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex," *XIX*, p. 178. In "Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinctions Between the Sexes," Freud expresses a similar position. "I cannot evade the notion (though I hesitate to give it expression) that for women the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in men. Their super-ego is never so inexorable, so impersonal, so independent of its emotional origins as we require of it in men." See: *XIX*, p. 257.

60. "Civilization and Its Discontents," *XXI*, p. 103, p. 104.

61. "Anatomical Sex-Distinctions," *XIX*, p. 258.

62. "The Ego and the Id," *XIX*, p. 35.

63. "New Introductory Lectures," *XXII*, p. 67.

64. "An Outline of Psychoanalysis," *XXIII*, p. 174.

65. "An Outline of Psychoanalysis," *XXIII*, p. 175.

66. "Psycho-analytic Procedure," *XII*, p. 251.

67. Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," *Illuminations*, p. 254.

68. "Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through," *XII*, p. 151.

69. "Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through," *XII*, p. 155.

70. "An Outline of Psychoanalysis," *XXIII*, p. 178.

71. Otto Rank, *The Double*, trans. H. Tucker (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971), p. 82.

72. "The Uncanny," *XVII*, p. 235.

Chapter Four

1. *SP*, p. 216.

2. *SP*, p. 213.

3. J. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), p. 276.

4. Nancy Fraser, "Foucault on Modern Power: Empirical Insights and Normative Confusions," *Praxis International*, Vol. 1, 1981, p. 284.

5. Charles Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth," in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Couzens Hoy (London, Basil Blackwell, 1986), p. 90.

6. *LCP*, pp. 145-6.

7. *LCP*, p. 147. Although the point I make here has not been addressed, the relation between Foucault and Freud had been commented on extensively. See, for example, Jacques-Alain Miller, "Michel Foucault and Psychoanalysis," in *Michel Foucault Philosopher*, trans. T. J. Armstrong (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 58-65; Patrick Hutton, "Foucault, Freud, and the Technologies of the Self," in *Technologies of the Self*, ed. L. Martin (Amherst: University of Mass. Press, 1988), pp. 121-145; James Bernauer, "Oedipus, Freud, Foucault: Fragments on an Archaeology of Psychoanalysis," in *Pathologies of the Modern Self: Postmodern Studies of on Narcissism, Schizophrenia, and Depression*, ed. D. M. Levin (New York: New York University Press, 1987), pp. 349-262.

8. *MC*, p. 245.

9. In *Madness and Civilization*, the role of knowledge in general and of the medical and psychiatric discourses in particular, appears to be marginal in the construction of subjectivity. The doctor is central to the asylum from its inception, but he functions as an administrator and as a voice of authority, not as the bearer of essential knowledge. See: *MC*, Ch. IX.

10. *MC*, p. 258. Foucault thought that Freud's clinical practice helped to bridge the gap between the madman and the Other, a gap that was inaugurated in the asylum. Yet Freud, in Foucault's view, did not go far enough in this direction. In his first published work, Foucault hailed Biswangers's existential-phenomenological psychiatry for its respect for the patient's difference and for its dialogical nature. See: Michel Foucault, *Mental Illness and Psychology*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976). This work was first published in 1954.

11. *HS*, p. 65.

12. *OT*, p. 373. In another context, Foucault also commends psychoanalysis for its critical stand towards nineteenth-century psychiatry. The latter viewed abnormality in terms of "degeneracy, eugenics, and heredity," a language that promoted increasing political intervention in the sexual life of the population, and ultimately provided "scientific support" for twentieth-century racism and fascism. Psychoanalysis had no use for these concepts, and introduced instead a new discourse that explained behavior and development in terms of the psyche and its history. See: *PK*, p. 60.

13. *PPC*, p. 95.

14. Foucault seems to have misinterpreted Weber's use of the term "rationality," arguing that it serves in the latter's writings as an all-embracing and uniform concept. Weberians, avers Foucault, regard rationality as an "anthropological invariant." "I don't believe," he continues, that "one can speak of an intrinsic notion of 'rationalization' without on the one hand positing an absolute value inherit in reason, and on the other taking the risk of applying the term empirically in a completely arbitrary way. I think one must restrict one's use of this word to an instrumental and relative meaning." See: "Foucault: Questions of Method," in *After Philosophy: End or Transformation*, eds. K. Baynes et al. (Cambridge, Mass: MIT press, 1987), p. 107. As I explain in the second chapter of this work, Weber was well aware of the relative and context-bound nature of the concept of rationality, lapses in his application of the term notwithstanding.

15. Michel Foucault, *Technologies Of The Self*, ed. L. Martin (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), p. 12.

16. Michel Foucault, *Foucault Live*, ed. S. Lotringer (NY: Semiotext[e], 1989), p. 61.

17. Michel Foucault, "The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom," in *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, Vols. 2-3, Summer, 1987, p. 121.

18. *OT*, p. xxii. For a discussion of Foucault's archaeology see: Gary Gutting, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Scientific Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

19. *OT*, p. 308.

20. *OT*, p. 313.

21. *OT*, pp. 314-15.

22 Foucault, *OT*, p. 318.

23. *OT*, p. 312.

24. *OT*, p. 326.

25. H. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 37.

26. *OT*, p. 331.

27. *OT*, p. 332.

28. *AK*, p. 219.

29. For discussions of Foucault's views about literature see: Simon During, *Foucault and Literature: Towards a Genealogy of Writing* (New York: Routledge, 1992), and John Rajchman, *Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), ch. 1.

30. The usefulness of the categories of apollonian and dionysian thought in interpreting Foucault's work has been demonstrated by Allen Megill. I am indebted to him here, although he does not use this distinction for an examination of the relation between literature and discourse in Foucault's thought. See: Allen Megill, *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, and Derrida* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), Chs. 5 & 6.

31. *OT*, p. 290.

32. *OT*, pp. 289-90.

33. *OT*, p. 304.

34. *OT*, p. 296.

35. *OT*, p. 297.

36. *OT*, p. 298.

37. Rajchman, *The Freedom of Philosophy*, p. 24.

38. *OT*, p. 298.

39. This is the title of the first part of their book where they discusses Foucault's work in the sixties. See: *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, pp. 3-100.

40. Megill, *Prophets of Extremity*, p. 238.

41. "The Discourse on Language," in *AK*, pp. 228-29. All the references to *AK* in this section are to this essay.

42. *AK*, p. 218.

43. *AK*, p. 222.

44. *AK*, p. 224. Foucault mentions a third group of constraints on discourse, one that involves its distribution in society and the designation of those who have the right and authority to speak. Both of these depend upon systems of exclusion. See: *AK*, pp. 224-27.

45. *AK*, p. 229.

46. *AK*, p. 216.

47. *AK*, p. 219.

48. *OT*, p. 383.

49. James Miller argues that Foucault's fascination with limit-experiences was not restricted to his theoretical work, but was something he also pursued in his private life. See: James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), pp. 29-30.

50. *OT*, p. 300.

51. *LCP*, p. 32.

52. *LCP*, pp. 34-5.

53. *LCP*, p. 36.

54. *OT*, p. 300.

55. *LCP*, p. 92.

56. *LCP*, p. 39.

57. *LCP*, p. 42.

58. *LCP*, p. 117.

59. *OT*, p. 386.

60. Foucault became rather critical of the transformative and liberating role that French intellectuals (including himself) assigned to the task of writing during the sixties. "The whole relentless theorization of writing which we saw in the 1960s," he declares, "was doubtless a swansong." See: Foucault, *PK*, p. 127. Elsewhere, Foucault claims that avant-garde literature, as well as philosophy, became at the time enclosed in the universities and lost any impact on society. See: Foucault, *PPC*, pp. 307-313.

61. *LCP*, p. 50.

62. *LCP*, p. 30.

63. *LCP*, p. 50.

64. *HS*, p. 142.

65. *HS*, p. 57.

66. *HS*, p. 43.

67. *HS*, p. 61.

68. *HS*, p. 60.

69 *HS*, p. 22. Both writers display the confessional ethic of modernity. However, Foucault seems to have preserved a special place for Sade, presenting him as someone who managed to escape some of the normalizing forces of bio-power. See: *HS*, p. 149. The late Foucault, in any event, was even more suspicious of the relation between writing and the exercise of power over oneself. In his study of the Romans during the second century A.D, he notes how the new activity of letter-writing allowed one to recount all passing thoughts, desires, and modes, thereby constituting a whole new domain that could be monitored and brought under control. He even sees conscience as originating in this practice. See: *Technologies of the Self*, pp. 27-30.

70. *PK*, p. 114.

71. *SP*, p. 219.

72. *SP*, p. 221.

73. *SP*, p. 221.

74. *SP*, p. 220.

75. *SP*, p. 219.

76. *DP*, p. 194.

77. Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, ed. P. Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), p. 245.

78. *SP*, p. 222. Paradoxically this position implies that the more extensive is the operation of power, the more opportunities are there for agonism and freedom.

79. "I've always been a little mistrustful of the general theme of liberation, to the extent that, if one does not treat it with a certain number of safeguards and within certain limits, there is the danger that it refers back to the idea that there does exist a nature or a human foundation which, as a result of a certain number of historical, social, or economic process, found itself concealed, alienated or imprisoned in and by some repressive

mechanism. In that hypothesis it would suffice to unloosen these repressive locks so that man can be reconciled with himself, once again find his nature or renew contact with his roots and restore a full and positive relationship with himself. I don't think that this is a theme which can be admitted without rigorous examination." See: Foucault, "The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom," p. 113.

80. John Rajchman, *Truth and Eros* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 109.

81. *PK*, p. 138. In this paragraph Foucault understands resistance (and hence freedom) in a totally negative way. As Alessandro Pizzorno puts it, for Foucault "[i]ndividuals or movements . . . can be free only 'against.'" However, this interpretation is incomplete, since in his late writings Foucault sees freedom not solely in terms of unruliness, as the centrifugal movements of a de-molded material, but also as the ability of the self to autonomously give an aesthetic shape to its life, even if this shape is always open to question and elaboration. I discuss the issue in the next section. See: Alessandro Pizzorno, "Foucault and the Liberal View of the Individual," in *Michel Foucault: Philosopher*, p. 208.

82. See in this context the discussion between Foucault and Bernard-henri Le'vy in "Power and Sex," in *PPC*, p. 122.

83. *HS*, p. 86. Elsewhere Foucault says that "power relations are perhaps among the best hidden things in the social body." See *PPC*, p. 118.

84. *DP*, p. 202. The Panopticon is a circular structure with a tower at its center, and separate, individual cells that are completely open towards the tower. A large window at the back of the cell allows light through. This renders the person in the cell completely visible (and isolated), while the person in the tower always remains hidden.

85. *DP*, p. 200.

86. *DP*, p. 201.

87. "The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom," p. 131. See also Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality Vol.* 2, trans. Robert Hurely (NY: Vintage Books, 1990), pp. 8-9.

88. *Technologies of the Self*, p. 10.

89. *PK*, pp. 93-4.

90. For more about this contrast, and about Foucault's relation to the Frankfurt School see: David Couzens Hoy, "Power, Repression, Progress: Foucault, Lukes, and the Frankfurt School," in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, pp. 123-148.

91. *PK*, p. 133.

92. *HS*, p. 93.

93. Megill, *Prophets of Extremity*, p. 183.

94. *HS*, p. 95.

95. *PK*, p. 99.

96. *HS*, p. 94.

97. *DP*, p. 217.

98. Weber, *From Max Weber*, p. 253.

99. *DP*, p. 166.

100. *DP*, p. 169.

101. *DP*, p. 145.

102. *DP*, p. 138.

103. Weber, *From Max Weber*, pp. 261-62.

104. *DP*, p. 152, p. 153.

105. Weber, *From Max Weber*, p. 254.

106. *DP*, p. 164.

107. *DP*, pp. 190-91.

108. See: *The Use of Pleasure*, p. 89.

109. *PPC*, p. 51.

110. *SP*, p. 244.

111. *PK*, p. 98.

112. Contemporary struggles against bio-power exhibit such a dialectic: in these struggles, the "forces that resisted relied for support on the very thing it [power] invested, that is, on life and man as a living being." As Foucault continuous to explain

> [W]hat we have seen has been a very real process of struggle; life as a political object was in a sense taken at face value and turned back against the system that was bent on controlling it. It was life more than the law that became the issue of political struggles, even if the latter were formulated through affirmations concerning rights. The 'right' to life, to one's body, to health, to happiness, to the satisfaction of needs, and beyond all the oppression or 'alienations,' the 'right' to rediscover what one is and all that one can be . . .

See: *HS*, p. 143, p. 144.

113. *OT*, p. 327.

Conclusion

1. Franz Kafka, *The Trial*, trans. Willa and Edwin Muir (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), p. 121.

2. Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics* (New York: Appleton, 1910), p. 32.

3. Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik* (Tübingen: J. C. Mohr, 1924), p. 420. Quoted here from Scaff, *Fleeing the Iron Cage*, p. 82.

4. Kafka, *The Trial*, p. 158, p. 52.

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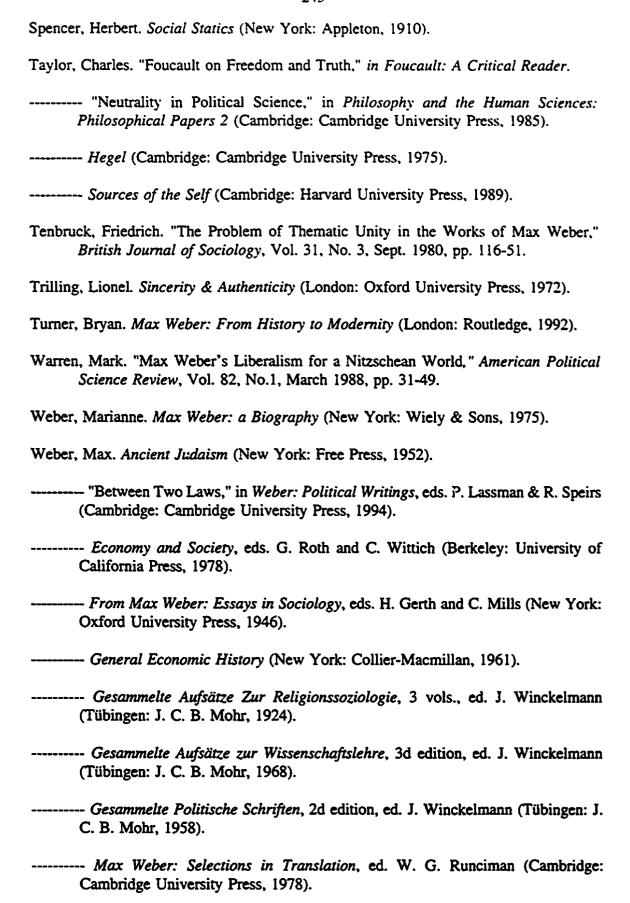Rice, James. *Freud's Russian: National Identity in the Evolution of Psychoanalysis* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1993).

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